

Childhood Education



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Childhood Education

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Communication is the surmounting of barriers which our uniqueness, biologically and experientially, places upon us.

What Is Communication?

COMMUNICATION IS THE WAYS BY WHICH WE HUMAN BEINGS COME TO understand each other. It is the surmounting of the barriers which our uniqueness, biologically and experientially, places upon us as individuals. It is our means for building a common world. It is our key to world peace and brotherhood. Without it we would lose our humanness.

Communication is more than mere oral or written expression. It is involved with tone and feeling, too; with gesture, movement, action, and reflection upon the meaning of these things. It implies both a sender and a receiver. It takes place in varying degrees according to the sensitivity, the receptivity, the purpose, the skill, and the interests of the sender and the receiver. Its quality depends, in part, upon appropriate timing. At its best it is a kind of communing, marked by new insights and understanding.

Baby looks up at me. I smile. His eyes light up. He tugs at my skirt. I reach down to help him stand. He trusts me. I help him. We have communicated.

In a sense, communication is the magic path of understanding between two selves—in some situations between many selves. It is a path that has to be created and tended carefully by the selves involved. To create and tend the path one must accept one's self and others, believe in the dignity and worth of humankind everywhere, have faith in life, be willing to listen to others, strive to understand others.

My experience with Larry, whom I came to think of as a poet in rags, will illustrate what communication means to me. Perhaps his story will help you to discover and communicate with many another Larry or Poj or Kate or Nuan.

I first met Larry in a fourth-grade class in a country school. His thin sallow face, emaciated body, torn dirty clothes spoke to me of poverty and neglect. The joy in his shy brown eyes when he "made a hundred" on spelling or excelled in arithmetic spoke to me of a self seeking fulfillment in the meager offerings of the school. One afternoon while a storm brewed in the Gulf, we painted the reading table—just the two of us. Grave and calm he painted dexterously while outside the sighing of the pines grew heavier and louder.

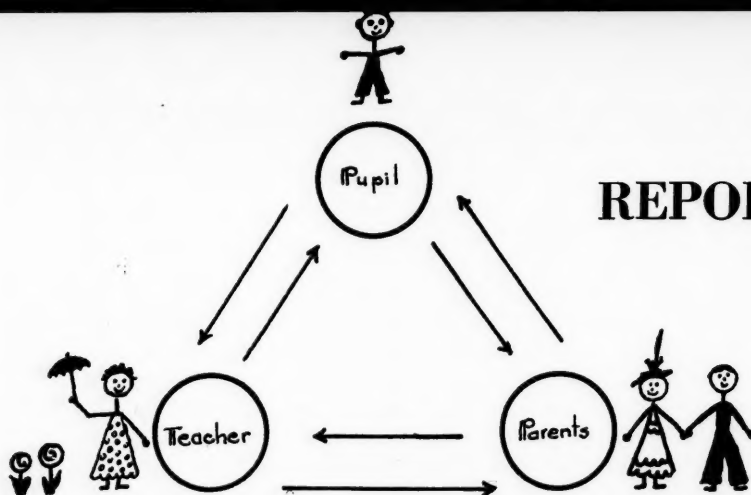
"Listen!" he commanded me. "The wind is talking today!" He painted on.

"Listen!" His voice was vibrant. "The wind is talking today!"

Softly I spoke, almost whispering, "What is the wind saying?"

"It's singing to the little seeds in the warm earth waiting for the Spring. It's calling to the butterflies asleep in the cocoons. It's telling them that soon the rain will come and Spring . . ."

HIS LANGUAGE WAS EXQUISITE. HE HAD COMMUNICATED TO ME THE heart of a poet!—CLARA M. OLSON, professor of education, University of Florida, Gainesville.



Actually there are reports

From		To		About
1. pupil	—	parent	—	teacher and school
2. pupil	—	teacher	—	home, family, and school
3. parent	—	pupil	—	teacher and school
4. parent	—	teacher	—	pupil and home
5. teacher	—	parent	—	pupil and school
6. teacher	—	pupil	—	the pupil himself

COMMUNICATION IS SO FREQUENTLY thought and spoken of as a 2-way process that to consider any communication as being 6-way sounds rather extravagant. If there is such a process, what are the factors involved and what is the concern of our schools in 6-way communication?

First let us look at the kind of communication we have had. For far too long it has been 1-way. We sent out reports about children, from teachers, to parents. Though parents commonly signed these reports, the signature was evidence only that the parents had seen and presumably read the report, rather than that communication had been established about the key person—the pupil.

An encouraging number of schools now have parent-teacher conferences to report and discuss pupil progress. When parents are free to ask questions and discuss their child's behavior as well as get a verbal report on progress of their

child from the teacher we are having 2-way communication. Valuable insight is gained by both parties from such communication.

But have we gone far enough? Have we considered the whole circuit where three parties are concerned? Usually when we think of communication as a 2-way process, we are concerned with two persons, two groups, or a combination of these. But when we consider reporting as a function of the school our key factors increase to three—the pupil, his parents, and the teacher. Changing focal points from two to three does not change the process simply from 2-way to 3-way, but increases it immediately to a 6-way process *if* we use what we know about child development, human relations, evaluation of progress, and a positive approach to the behavior of the learner.

The drawing shows the 6-way communication. Most of these lines of communication already exist, but we need to become more conscious of them so that

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a 6-way communication

the end product, the responses of those communicating, gains in quality.

Pupils Report to Parents

Almost daily children report in one way or another to parents about school.

"Wow, did we have a good time at school today! Billy brought his telegraph outfit. It works by electricity from a battery and we could really send messages in code!" (Significantly *we*, not you!)

"I don't want to go to school anymore. None of the kids like me, and I'm the only one who doesn't have a Davy Crockett shirt or cap or anything. Gee, Mom, I hate this new school."

"Guess what, Daddy! My teacher says to tell you and Mom I didn't bother any of the other children today and I finished all my work. *Now* are you proud of me?"

"Mommy, listen! It was our teacher's birthday today and she had a super party for us. She had a great, great, great big cake—made of popcorn! And you should have seen her bee-yooo-ti-ful dress. It was all black with little teensy flowers all over and a real twirly skirt and did she *smell* good! I think maybe she didn't ever have perfume on before—at school."

Children who are having satisfying experiences like to tell their parents about school, about the teacher, about the other children, and what they themselves are doing; but children whose experiences are not satisfying need a listening ear just as much. Only lack of interest on the part of parents cuts off this very worthwhile line of communication of young children.

Pupils Report to the Teacher

"My mother got a pretty new hat for Easter. It cost eighteen-fifty, but I'm not sup-

posed to tell. My mother says daddy would raise the roof if he knew, but she says what he doesn't know won't hurt him. Isn't that funny! I was with her downtown when she bought the hat and then we had hot fudge sundaes, but I'm *not* supposed to tell how much the hat cost."

"Jeepers, Miss Gordon, do we *have* to do those problems? My mom and dad both say they were never any good with numbers so they don't expect I'll be either. They say they're not going to hound me about not getting good marks in arithmetic. Oh, jeepers, *why* do we have to do so many?"

"We had the best time this week end. My cousins from Minneapolis came and whenever they come we always sleep three in a bed. It's lots of fun! You know *we* have only two children, me and my little brother, and we each have a room with a big bed now. Well, when my cousins from Minneapolis come, all the boys sleep together and all the girls sleep together. That's three in each bed. We really have fun, and Aunt Katy brings new books from the bookshop and we all read together, mostly though Uncle Bob reads to us—*ten* of us, six children and four grown-ups, you know. And then you know what? We make up plays—our daddies and mommies, too. Oh is my daddy ever funny when he acts! He and Aunt Katy did a play of "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." The boys were the goats and *what* a troll my daddy was! You *should* have seen him! We just can't wait to go visit my cousins in Minneapolis next summer."

A sympathetic teacher will be aware of what the children say about their parents and in what light a child sees his parents. He will foster, in an ethical way, this sort of communication. He will also listen to and discuss with the pupils their delights and difficulties with other children.

Parents Report to Pupils

"Aren't we lucky that Miss Swanson isn't retiring yet! You know, Cynthia, both Popsy and I had her for our teacher in the second grade. She's wonderful. Oh, she's very particular about things, like how you write, but most of us know we learned good penmanship in her room. And how we loved to read

there! She read and she *told* us so many good stories. I wonder if they are even in books. Oh, you *are* a lucky girl! We must think of nice things to do to help Miss Swanson because you know she had that broken ankle this spring and still has trouble getting around."

"I don't give a hang what your homeroom teacher says about bringing money for the community chest. If it isn't enough that your father had his check cut short on account of that—well, she can just put it in herself. Teachers are overpaid anyhow . . . Four times your father has been transferred since you youngsters started to school and I do declare every place we move has a worse school than the one before. I think you'd get smarter staying home."

"But Timmy, I'm sure Miss Wilson doesn't mean that. I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll invite her over here to have supper with us some evening this very week. You'll see she really does like you as much as your kindergarten teacher. After all first grade is a fine place to be! Timmy, what shall we have for dessert when Miss Wilson comes? *You* get to choose!"

Interested parents will, from time to time, speak to their children about school and their teachers. The parents' interest, knowledge, and attitudes toward school (assuming the school is one the parents can rightfully uphold) will go a long way toward making the child feel he is an integral part of the school. Whole-some communication of this sort can develop to the stage where parents, when their children are older, can point out problems and inadequacies of the school and by making plausible suggestions for improvement, help their children initiate change for the better.

Parents Report to the Teacher

"I guess it isn't customary for fathers to come to school," Mr. Johns confided, fingering the brim of a smart, new gray felt. "But you're a man and I, well I, I was so sure I could talk to you about the twins. Now that they are in fourth grade I feel it's time they are beginning to bear down on music. I never

had a chance to take music lessons and wanted to so badly that I'm going to be sure *my* boys get a chance. I've spent a lot of money on the instruments I thought they should have. Few kids get a French horn like the one I bought Lenny. Of course I know that cello is sort of big for Kenny but I've explained it to him again and again. That smaller sized one he saw in the music store is an inferior instrument and he will have to learn his fingering all over for the full-sized cello so why not begin on a real one now—and it is a beauty of a cello. Well, at first the boys practiced night and day it seemed. Now, not even two months later, I have to nag them all the time. My wife doesn't have much interest in music so she doesn't help them and now that I have this new job traveling for the company I'm not home enough. What shall I do? How can I make the twins appreciate the advantages I'm giving them?"

"Miss Johnson, you have no idea how much happier our household is since you told us to stop tutoring Coleen in her reading. I knew she was behind having been out of school so long this winter and I *did* want to be sure she got caught up. But imagine what has happened now! Just the other evening she brought a book home of her own accord and read all of it to us. We were so pleased—and all on account of you who convinced us to keep hands off and let her have more free time."

Parent to teacher communication is so valuable a part of reporting that we should not be content with the regularly scheduled conferences, two, three, or four times a year. Here are lines of communication that should be continually open.

Teachers Report to Parents

Most teachers are aware of the rewards of reporting directly to parents—reporting which pays off in good home-school relations.

A teacher notices the bubbling-over-with-pride of a little girl as she skips and dances, joining in the kindergarten rhythms. She has on a new red dress, hardly wrinkled, and never yet washed. The sleeves have been gathered in rather awkwardly, the stitching around the pocket has wavered considerably,

and the waist cloth gaps from one laboriously-made buttonhole to the next. The teacher reads all this into one appreciative statement. "Suzanne, you have a new dress! Who made it for you? . . . I thought so. What a becoming color! The skirt is marvelous for dancing. Let me write a little note to your mother, you can carry it home in your pocket!"

The note on a small slip of pink paper from the teacher's pad, read: "Dear Mrs. Wilson, You have no idea how much pleasure Suzanne's new dress has given. She tells us you made it. How glad we are to know of one more mother who sews. We may be calling on you for some help in our doll's house! Cordially yours, . . ."

The teacher telephoned Cecelia's house one evening. Her father answered and recognizing the voice said promptly, "Nice to hear you, I'll call Mrs. Miller."

"But I can tell you what I'm calling about if you have the time," assured the teacher. And thus it was that she related to him an account of the exceptionally courteous (and certainly unprompted) behavior of his five-year-old daughter at an after-school birthday party in the home of one of her classmates.

"What good news," purred Cecelia's father, a busy pediatrician, "you know we try like everything to bring up our children to be kind and courteous but I suppose like all parents we always wonder—wonder what they do when we're not around to check on them. Thank you *so much* for telling me! I'll report this to Mrs. Miller . . . no don't apologize for taking my time. It's such a pleasure to hear nice things about one's children. Call me anytime—even downtown at the office. I've *always* got time to hear good reports about my children!"

The few minutes taken to call this parent (not waiting to check an "S" for "satisfactory" under "Social habits—courtesy to others" on the next six weeks report) were repaid many fold in strengthened positive behavior on the part of the child, bouncing in each morning to a school she liked and knew her parents liked. True, this is not the reporting of academic progress, but what do we *mean* when we say we are concerned with the "whole child"? Involved

in these quick, on-the-spot reports there is a matter of timing that is of far greater value than most of us have realized.

Teachers Report to Pupils

Let's not be guilty of "too little and too late." Let's report when it will do the most good. Timing is ever so significant a factor in our reporting to children—as is the manner. Shall our praise of a child be in the presence of his classmates so he knows they hear, or is the child too shy, is such praise more than he can endure? Would it be more effective if the teacher sent a private little wink or nod of approval from across the room, or would it be more assuring for him to feel the teacher's hand on his shoulder while he confided, "I was *so* proud of you today. You were *simply* marvelous with that puppet!"

Communication from teacher to pupil goes on almost continuously. It goes on whether he is smiling with approval or scornfully handing out sarcasm. It goes on when he shrugs his shoulders with disinterest at all that is reported by the Bunker children, and when he listens with real concern and genuine sympathy to Freddy's woeful tale of his wire-haired that got killed last night—all these are ways a teacher communicates to his pupils.

But is it enough that we become aware of and use all the 6 lines of communication? Surely not. We must become increasingly sensitive to the product of our communication—the responses in action and behavior. It is with the measuring stick of quality that we must evaluate our product and when we do it seems likely that we will no longer be satisfied with 1-way or 2-way communication for our schools but that we will open the whole circuit.

Overcoming BLOCKS in Communication

Communication involves knowing and understanding the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs of those trying to communicate. There are hurdles, yet there are some practical ways we can work at getting over them.

MOST OF THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN parent and teacher—written or oral, direct or indirect, formal or informal, individual or group—has as its focus common concern in the development and welfare of the child. Despite this mutual interest, communication between parent and teacher is not simple.

The blocks to communication, even where opportunities for meetings are available, have their origin in semantic, perceptual, emotional, and cultural differences between parents and teachers.

Not the Same Child

Although parent and teacher are talking about Billy, whose growth both want to promote, Billy is not the same child to both of them. Any two individuals tend to see things somewhat differently. The further apart they are in vantage points and the greater their emotional involvement, the more likely they are to see different views of the same picture. As parent and teacher confer about Billy, each comes with his own idea of the child. The life pattern of the classroom, for example, may be quite unlike that in the home or neighborhood. Standards of acceptable behavior and situational pressures may vary so that the child meets these demands in very different ways. Often, when parent and teacher talk about the child, they talk as if the conditions and behavior were exactly

the same, yet they are talking about the Billy each has observed in somewhat different roles.

The teacher sees the child as one of a group, compares him in his mind with his peers, judges the adequacy of his performance in relation to standards he has developed from experiences with children. The parents see the child more as a single entity and can compare him only with older siblings or the children of neighbors, or their younger selves, as they remember these. Thus, the image of the child which is held by the parents and by the teacher emerges from varying experiences and is colored by the needs, goals, and aspirations of the perceiver.

To the parents, the child is a part of their emotional life. They see his behavior as a reflection of their own adequacy; his achievement as a measure of their success. When the child is praised, it is as if they were themselves receiving praise. When he is criticized, the criticism hits them personally even though they themselves may feel displeased with him. For the same reason, parents often overlook negative aspects of the child or exaggerate his apparent strengths. If they feel that the child does not live up to their expectations or has let them down, they see minor shortcomings as serious inadequacies. Often when parents come to talk with teachers, they see their offspring as "good" or "bad," competent or inept, pleasant or unpleasant. They evaluate the teacher's report in terms of this concept.

To the teacher, the child's success may be a source of satisfaction or sense of accomplishment; his failure or maladjust-

ment a cause for concern and remedial action. Although both the pleasure and the concern may be real, the teacher never carries the full emotional load of the parents. He can neither assume the full credit for successes nor need he feel the full weight of disappointment for failures.

If both parents and teacher have a generally positive estimate of the child, it may be easier to talk about the child's strengths and weaknesses. Even then, however, there may be blocks. A problem which the teacher views as minor, or recognizes as common to the child's age group, may be very threatening to the parents. Suppose the teacher reports that 6-year-old Billy, who is generally a fine boy, has been found taking small things that do not belong to him. Such a finding may hardly ruffle the teacher, who has seen similar behavior in many 6 year olds. To the parents, it may come as a blow, casting doubt on their own adequacy and causing great worry. Yet when parents and teacher have a generally accepting attitude toward Billy, they may be able to solve the problem.

Where the teacher's and the parents' general evaluations of the child are at odds, communication is most difficult. The teacher may interpret the parents' description of the child as unrealistic, unobjective, colored by their own needs. The parents may perceive the teacher's statements as lacking in understanding or as hostility toward their child, or as evidence of general incompetence.

Interpreting School's Function

Blocks to communication may also result from different interpretations of the school's role with regard to the child.

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Some parents feel that the teacher's job is to teach basic skills and knowledge, leaving the personal development of the child alone; others feel that the teacher is failing when he neglects the child's personal and social development in focusing exclusively on subject matter.

The teacher, too, has some fairly strong expectations of the parents' role in child development, opinions which do not necessarily coincide with those of the parents. Whose responsibility is it to see that the child is clean and tidy, does his work regularly and neatly, develops positive attitudes toward school, accepts limits, and obeys rules? Often the teacher feels that the parents are at fault when the child is failing in one or more of these areas.

Preconceptions of Competency

Even where there is mutual understanding of the role each is to play, teachers and parents may disagree on their preconceptions of each other's competencies. The teacher privately may see the parents as more or less intelligent, interested or disinterested, skilled in parenthood or unskilled. The parents, on the other hand, judge the teacher on ability, understanding, guidance qualities. These preconceptions spring from many sources. The child himself helps to create an image through what he reports and how he behaves. Parents of former pupils contribute to the teacher's reputation. A parent's own past experiences with school may develop an attitude which treats what the teacher says as either gospel, or at the other extreme, as proof of incompetence. For example, a child's failure to learn to read, as well as his parents desire, may convince them of the teacher's inability to teach reading or his neglect of the child. The teacher may see parents as unwilling to provide needed help, unable to recognize the

youngster's limitations, or responsible for creating emotional blocks in the child.

The initial picture that the parents and teacher have of each other is carried through the child himself. It takes sensitivity to separate out from the child's judgments the realities and the fantasies. A single unpleasant incident may color the child's concept of the teacher as "mean" or "doesn't understand kids." Such a concept is communicated to the parents who often bring these feelings to the conferences. The teacher, too, forms preconceptions of the parents from what the child says about life at his home, but even more from his behavior and appearance. If the child is unkempt, his shoes unshined, his work habits sloppy, the teacher may think of the parents as disinterested, negligent, or generally incompetent.

Without understanding the degree of importance parents attach to various behaviors, the teacher—applying his own standards of importance—may misjudge the parents. Parents and teachers, therefore, listen to what the other says in terms of the picture they have formed through the medium of the child.

Restrictions on Communication

Still another hurdle to mutual understanding arises from the restrictions which hedge the conference situation. Philosophical and administrative barriers may determine how general or how specific the teacher can be, how much or how little he can disclose. The parent wants to know as much as he can about his child. Being emotionally involved, he may want to hear more or less than the teacher is willing to pass on. Similarly, the parent may be unwilling to disclose details of the home situation. Such limitations can restrict free communication and understanding.

Nature of Contact

The very nature of the situations in which parents and teachers meet may add blocks. Many school contacts are limited to an annual or periodic meeting, centered around a presentation of common interest, and followed by a discussion in which parents may relate their individual concerns to the central theme. Many parents may remain silent in such meetings, perhaps because they do not understand the program, or hesitate to express unpopular points of view, or cannot bring their real concerns about their child to a large group.

Next to one's inner self, the child is probably the parent's most private possession, most vulnerable to outside attack. In groups where personal problems are discussed, it is very common for a parent to camouflage his description with, "I have a friend who . . ." Recognition of some parents' inability to expose their inner problems or the problems of their child to group inspection has led many schools to plan for regular individual parent-teacher conferences. Unfortunately, frequently the teacher organizes the time and the agenda in such a way that free interchange of feelings and ideas is hampered.

Improving Communication

The question is how to level some of these hurdles to free and effective communication. A few suggestions follow.

Get to know each other. People can usually reach others if they know each other. Unfortunately, in many instances teachers are not accepted as social peers of parents and are deprived of many situations in which they could build a foundation for understanding. When they are invited to dinner, the occasion is frequently an obligation rather than a pleasurable experience based on mutual understanding and respect. The school

can help parents and teachers develop more positive social and interpersonal relationships by involving them in mutually rewarding social and professional activities that lay a basis for more meaningful communication later.

Develop mutual acceptance. As teachers realize that they have much to learn from parents of their pupils and recognize that talking freely together can reduce their anxieties and lead to mutually enjoyable experiences, they will develop a better appreciation of what parents bring to a conference situation. Many and continuing satisfying experiences will be needed before parents feel they have a real place in the life of the school and teachers accept parents in this role. Only through the building of assurances and acceptances can good communication be achieved.

See through the other person's eyes. Communication is greatly facilitated when each of the persons involved can imagine himself in the place of the other and can see the problem through the other's eyes. In listening to a mother's description of her child's behavior—a description which contradicts his own observations—the teacher must learn to think *not*, "What nonsense, Billy isn't like that," but rather, "What would I see if I were Billy's mother?" and "Why does his mother see this problem the way she does?" Looking at a situation from another's point of view is never easy. However, as the teacher tries to see through the parent's eyes, his acceptance may grow and the more emotionally involved parent may absorb some of this same objectivity.

Provide two-part conferences. To alter the character of a conference from a reporting session and to increase two-way communication, it is sometimes useful to divide a conference in parts. First, the parent may be encouraged to raise

questions and voice his own concerns, anxieties, and problems. After this, the teacher can respond to the parent and present what he had originally planned. Such a division will tend to insure the parent an opportunity to express his thoughts and feelings even though he does not come as carefully prepared as the teacher.

Avoid probing into personal affairs. In the attempt to understand better the child and the home from which he comes, the teacher should be careful not to probe into the personal life of parents and family. The teacher is neither therapist nor analyst. Probing may likely provoke resistance or hostility and raise further barriers. While parents may reveal very personal information, the teacher should not solicit it.

Reassess opportunities for communication. Some goals can be reached in large meetings while other objectives may be neglected by such sessions. Activities presenting children themselves in the school setting may stimulate parent-teacher talks. While speeches, films, or mass meetings serve some purposes, they do not insure direct communication. School planners must strive to balance meetings which strengthen school-parent ties and small group or individual conferences which focus directly on Billy, his peers, and his classroom situation.

Practice skills involved in communication. Teachers should take the initiative to analyze and study situations in which barriers do exist. This approach will help them to see specific blocks and to begin experimenting with techniques, media, and conditions which will help overcome communication hurdles.

As parents and teachers learn to communicate more easily with each other, they can then work side by side to provide better educational experiences for the child who links them.

How Do Children Communicate?

How do patterns of communication change as children grow older? A number of the child's developmental tasks are recurrent yet each new phase evokes behaviors that adults need to understand. Mildred C. Letton is assistant professor of education, University of Chicago, Illinois.

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND CHILDREN'S patterns of communication, it is necessary to be aware of the developmental tasks with which they are faced at any given period. Children in the middle and upper grades are reaching the end of *middle childhood* and entering the period of *early adolescence*.

Once speech has been mastered, the child finds himself communicating with his parents, with other adults, and with other children. Conversation becomes his easiest way of learning about the fascinating world around him. Today the child supplements conversation with watching television for this purpose. Nevertheless, throughout life conversation remains the chief means of human communication. By the time he has reached the middle and upper grades, the child has had considerable experience with what might be called the one-way, one-time communicators—radio, television, and motion pictures. Reading is also a one-way communicator inasmuch as the reader usually has no opportunity to ask the author questions or share his own ideas on the same subject with the writer. Yet reading is not limited to the "one-time" opportunity, for the reader can easily go back to the writing again and again to reinterpret it if he wishes.

In *middle childhood*, according to Havighurst, the child has been learning the physical skills necessary for ordinary games; building wholesome attitudes

toward himself as a growing organism; learning to get along with age-mates; learning an appropriate sex role; developing fundamental skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic; developing concepts necessary for everyday living; developing conscience, morality, and a scale of values; and developing attitudes toward social groups and institutions. In *early adolescence* he is learning to accept his sex role; learning new relations with age-mates of both sexes; seeking emotional independence of parents and other adults; beginning to develop intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence; and beginning to desire and achieve, to some extent, socially responsible behavior.

An examination of the sequence of living and learning activities shows that a number of the child's developmental tasks are recurrent ones. "Learning to get along with one's age-mates is a good example of the recurrent task. It begins in earnest for most people about the time they start to school, and in its first phase it is pretty well mastered by the age of 9 or 10. But the coming of puberty changes the nature of the task and it has to be carried on into a new phase, that of learning to get along with age-mates of the opposite sex."¹

In early adolescence the child's efforts, sometimes clumsy, to seek emotional in-

¹Havighurst, Robert J. *Developmental Tasks and Education*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1952, p. 31.

dependence of parents and other adults may make him appear overcritical, rebellious, changeable, and uncooperative. At the same time he needs affection from adults. The teacher who understands his own role with youngsters at this period of emotional development can be helpful both to pupils and parents.

What Do They Have To Say?

What are the patterns of communication which children establish as they grow older? As all parents are aware, there is a tremendous amount of communication by *speaking*—long telephone conversations concerned with school and church activities and plans, social affairs, and seemingly endless discussions among girls about boys, clothes, hair styles, motion picture actors and actresses, and personal experiences. The boys, maturing somewhat later, more than likely are talking about local and national sports, hobbies, school activities, and team projects.

At school, speaking activities are of two sorts, formal and informal. The informal activities tend to be conversations and discussions, while the formal ones are usually teacher-initiated in the classroom, as oral reports, or come about as a part of a formal situation, as reading the minutes, presiding, initiating or speaking about a motion in a club meeting.

Many children avoid writing as a means of communication insofar as possible. Parents wrestle with getting offspring to write thank-you notes at Christmas and on birthdays; teachers often find lack of enthusiasm among their pupils for writing invitations to school affairs, business letters, and thank-you notes. Part of this is undoubtedly due to the complexity and tediousness of handwriting as well as the rigors of the mechanics such as punctuating and paragraphing,

which are added to the task of creating the message itself.

However, as children gain more skill, both boys and girls show interest in letter writing, not to adults, but to their peers while in camp or traveling during vacations. Girls probably do more writing of friendly letters than boys. This area of communication becomes more meaningful as children grow up.

During this period there is considerable attention given to secret clubs, organizations, chiefly social in purpose, with carefully worked out systems of codes to carry on communication among members. Interest in codes may begin among 7 and 8 year olds, but reaches a higher stage of development among 12 and 13 year olds. An example at a very simple level occurred a few years ago when I worked with an eighth-grade group which wrote and produced a mystery play. The title chosen was *Detivni Era Uoy* (You Are Invited—in reverse, of course).

It is during early adolescence that youngsters often are introduced to "pig Latin" and the latest elements of the vocabulary of slang. Children not only use these to communicate with each other, but also to keep older persons, particularly parents and teachers, from knowing exactly what they are saying. This, too, is a part of the growing effort to be independent of adults. Rapid mass communication in general has reduced the regional flavor of slang, made currently popular the widespread use of individual words and phrases, and actually provided an adult audience for the joke and story whose meaning depends on the listener's knowledge of slang.

Children at this time show limited interest in poetry as a means of personal communication. They read little of it except in school and while some adolescent girls may write a few poems, these

often are rather personal pieces and are seldom purposely meant to be used to communicate their thoughts to anyone else.

Middle-grade children like to share their own writings with younger school mates. The early adolescent, anxious to grow up, is frequently more interested in patterning his own creative efforts after those of older school mates or adults, so that it would not seem appropriate to him to have an audience of persons younger than himself.

What Do They Choose To Write?

When children do use personal writing as means of communication, what do they choose to write about? In the middle grades the subject is often animals, travel, or adventure. In the upper grades both boys and girls like to write about travel, adventure, outdoor activities, personal experiences, and success. Without direction, when writing stories, pupils are likely to rely heavily on violence for reader interest. The influence of science fiction may often be noted. Science fiction gives the author an opportunity to create and define new words, to use imaginative settings, and to produce other-than-human characters.

The early adolescent often shows in his writing the kinds of problems he thinks about. Adine in grade seven wrote:

I wonder who made the moon,
I wonder who made the sun,
I wonder who cuts the snowflakes out
And drops them one by one.

Jonathan, also in grade seven, was tackling another problem when he wrote "Death by the Doorbell." It is brief, but quite complete.

I walked to the door like a condemned man and pushed the doorbell. There was a rumble like the crack of doom, then a pounding echo like a cannon blast. I stood there in silence. Then the door opened and he stood there. He bade me come in. I came in and sat down. I waited for what seemed like eternity. I heard a rustling and stood up; my knees started to tremble, but she smiled and set me at ease. There I was, embarked on my first date. It was not really death by the doorbell.

Margo, an eighth grader, explained her point of view in a discussion, "The Good Old Days." She began:

Since time immemorial there has been a constant struggle for survival between teenagers and their parents. In this essay I shall attempt to highlight one scene of the battle. It revolves around the phrase, "When I was your age . . ." My parents seem to have the mistaken impression that the oncoming generation is a mixture of bubble gum, comics, and Julius LaRosa. This may all be true, but what about Mommy's generation? . . .

Following a discussion of the youth of both her parents, Margo ended with:

"Now I have proved my point, I hope. To all you young people I say only this, parents will be parents."

How Can We Help?

The language arts teacher has a two-fold responsibility which does not end with guiding youngsters in the use of the skills of communication—in helping them become proficient in these skills. With a knowledge and understanding of child growth and development, the effective teacher is able to let pupils use communication, both oral and written, as a kind of safety valve as they meet personal problems in working through some of the developmental tasks which are a part of growing up.

THE SCHOOLS HAVE NEVER BEEN ANYWHERE AS GOOD AS THEY ARE TODAY, but the gap between what they are and what people want is greater than ever before.—SLOAN WILSON, "Public Schools Are Better Than You Think," *Harper's Magazine*, September 1955.

Teachers learn about children

When They Are Out-of-School

Children—and adults, too—behave in terms of their setting and expectations held for them. Change the setting and you see the children responding differently than you might have expected from the classroom. The following article is based on anecdotes supplied by people working with children all over the country.

It Was a Learning Experience!

"To my group of third graders, born in the automobile age, a ride on a train was as exciting as it must have been in 1830. To me it was an object lesson.

"All the familiar types were there—unmasked and uninhibited. When off guard some of my angels proved demons, and vice versa. I was surprised to see some so poised and courteous—others so scatterbrained and rude; some so shy—others so aggressive; some so popular—others so friendless; some so thoughtful—others so selfish."

"I took my group plus their parents on a tour of a state park for a culminating activity. We took our lunch along, and then hiked through the hills. There was no need for a sociogram; I could readily tell who was well liked and why. I observed self-control, attentiveness to hiking warnings, balance, in another way than I did in the classroom. I was amazed to see the timid ones enjoy the day, and talk as freely as others."

Through a Variety of Activities

Outdoor Education. Two teachers and their wives and 23 parents took 47 children on an overnight outing. The youngsters did their share—they planned, pur-

chased, and prepared all the food for the trip. When they reached the park, hikes were organized and enjoyed. In the evening around a huge campfire, different groups of students and parents entered into the fun of presenting skits.

Visiting the Farm in the Summer. "The first graders who come to this farm each summer have taught me that they want, most of all, to experience learning situations in the out-of-doors. They are not here very long before they are saying gleefully, 'Teacher, this has changed!' or, 'It's like the story you read!' or 'May I try to read the story?' or 'I'm not afraid of anything now.'"

"Children love working with mechanical things but they will leave them for things that are alive such as a puppy or a trip to the barn at milking time."

An International Visit. "Four times last year I took my sixth grade to visit a class in British Columbia, Canada, an evening concert, and skating parties. A wonderful amount of child-teaching-teacher took place. Good for the children, too."

In Sunday School. "Each Sunday morning a group of girls and boys, ranging in ages from 7 to 9, meets in a small basement room of an old brick church. The teacher knows each child well and carefully studies his expression as he takes his chair close to her or some distance away. She realizes that each child

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is a unique personality. One requires much affection and attention while another is very sure of himself and his status in the group.

"The class was organized with rules, standards, and regulations made by the members. So each feels a sense of obligation, responsibility and concern for the discipline of the class. When a child annoys someone else or engages in an act of mischief, he looks at class members for censure rather than at the teacher, for he knows that they will express more disapproval than the kind eyes of the understanding teacher."

An Individual and His Problems

"On our first Audubon Club hike my fifth grade discovered that we had a well-informed naturalist in our midst. Dan, a newcomer in the group, had been shy and reserved contributing little during the first few weeks of school. But on our trip, he was busy identifying the killdeer, the flicker, the chickadee, and the mourning dove. How pleased he was (teacher too) to hear exclamations such as: 'Let's ask Dan,' or 'Gee, Dan knows a lot about the outdoors,' and 'I'm glad Dan's in our group now.'"

"Here was group acceptance. The happy relaxed expression on Dan's face clearly showed that he had found his place in this group."

"One morning I stood at the window watching the children. When Dale entered the playground he was met almost immediately with loud hoots and jeers, 'Here's Dumbo!' 'How about them ears?' 'Can't you flap'em, Dale?' Dale turned and ran as fast as his 7-year-old legs would carry him to the opposite side of the playground, followed by the group of yelling, taunting children in what appeared to be a very familiar pattern.

"I stood amazed! Could this be the

reason for Dale's unwillingness to participate in school activities, for his tension and difficulty in the reading circle?

"Opportunity was quickly found for private conferences with the leaders. Plans were made by and with them, and new understanding developed with a resulting change of behavior toward Dale. During the rest of the year there was a gradual change in Dale himself and his activities in group work."

"From the first day Roddy had taken his place in the corner of the room, away from the rest of the children. During classroom activities he stayed alone most of the time. Especially during playground activities and rhythms in the classroom where boys and girls shared experiences, Roddy remained away from the crowd.

"The class planned a two-day trip to historic Charlestown, S.C., with an overnight at a cabin on Folly Beach. At first, Roddy said emphatically that he would not go. After weeks of planning, children began bringing their money to pay for their trip. Much to my surprise, Roddy brought his money also, with the explanation that he had worked on odd jobs to earn it.

"We took the trip, and everyone enjoyed it, especially the afternoon and evening on the beach.

"On the way back Roddy said, 'You know, girls aren't so bad when you have to live with them awhile.' The more we talked, the more I could understand that Roddy, one of a set of twin boys with no other siblings in the family, had kept to himself because he had not wanted to associate with girls. He was up against the developmental task of heterosexual adjustment, and it took an experience in which he had constant companionship with girls to make him realize that girls weren't so bad after all."

Utilizing Spelling Research

ENGLISH SPELLING HAS BEEN A SEVERE trial to school teachers and a subject of great interest to linguistic scholars ever since Samuel Johnson recorded his concept of it in his dictionary in 1755. Spelling can scarcely be called one of the language arts, but it is an essential element in literacy—and achieving is a basic task of children in any school. Hildreth has called spelling “a sort of draft horse” of written expression. Together with writing, it forms the vehicle which carries meaning from the mind of the writer to the mind of the reader.

The reason English spelling is a trial is clear to anyone who attempts to match sounds and letters in some of the most commonly used words. A recent book on simplified spelling by Boyer of England lists fourteen ways to spell the long sound of *a* in writing English words.

Learning to spell the words one needs to write is a never-ending task. Any literate adult who gives attention to the inventions and the new areas of skill and interest which concern mankind is forever learning to spell new words. No adult learned as a child in school to spell *penicillin*, *atomic fission*, *supersonic*, or any one of scores of such newly used words. Some of the words adults use glibly did not exist when they were children and many did not carry the meaning that they carry today. Every individual probably learns far more spelling after he leaves the last class in which it was taught than he ever learned in school. So objective number one for the teaching of spelling must be: *Help*

each child develop an effective method of learning spelling. This must be a method he can use by himself as he has occasion to learn new words. It must be one that is as economical of effort and as thoroughly effective as possible.

Many studies by Horn, Gates, Thorndike, Fitzgerald, Rinsland, and others give ample evidence regarding the common words of English—those that are used most frequently in all types of writing, whether formal or informal, dealing with ordinary work-a-day ideas or highly specialized ones. We have evidence regarding the most needed words. Objective number two then must be: *Help each child learn to spell accurately and confidently as many as possible of the common words of English.*

Spelling in the School Program

Spelling has only one purpose—to enable readers to gain meaning from what is written. If one had no need to write for anyone but himself, any type of code might serve his purpose. But since most writing exists to be read by others than those who wrote it, it is essential that there be a conventional system for translating meanings and oral symbols into graphic symbols. Probably one of the reasons it is difficult to motivate some children to really work on spelling is that its arbitrariness is to them incomprehensible.

Spelling and Oral Language. A child who is learning to put his own ideas on paper writes as he would talk. His sentence structure and his word usage are those he uses in his speech. One of the problems of many poor spellers is

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that they try to spell what they say. The child who wrote, "I gotta go to the libery the smorning," and the college student who wrote *essentual* for *essential* both habitually said it that way. If teachers will pronounce words the way the well-spoken persons of the region pronounce them, it will help children to associate the sounds they hear and use with the spelling.

Spelling and Reading. There is close relationship between learning to read and learning to spell. Some children learn a great deal of spelling through their reading though some learn very little. People who work with disabled readers have found that poor readers tend to be even poorer spellers. Russell found that, at the end of second grade, spelling ability was closely associated with ability to recognize words in reading and to blend the word meanings into the larger meaning of the paragraph. Recognition of letters of the alphabet and skill in visual discrimination of words were also closely related to readiness for spelling. Reading helps children to expand and deepen their fund of meanings for words and helps them, through the use of words in a context, to see that words which look very much alike may have very different meanings.

Words which have concrete meaning for children are both easier to learn to recognize in reading and to learn to spell. The words *play*, *boy*, *fun*, and *movie* are far easier to learn than *where*, *what*, *because*, and *once* which cannot be conceived concretely nor associated with concrete experience. A difficult word like *bicycle* will be easily learned if it holds great interest for a child.

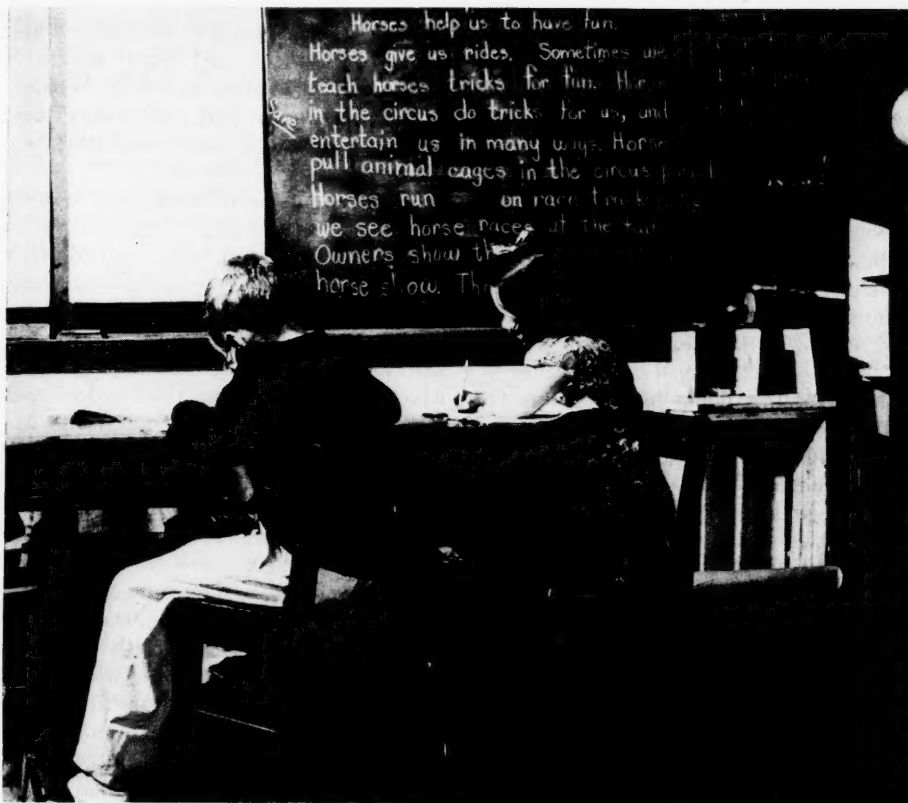
Occasionally someone suggests that when new words are met in reading, the child should learn to spell them. While it is true that the words which appear most frequently in reading are words

common enough to be needed in writing, many words which children learn to read will have little or no use in writing either in school or later. Learning to use the dictionary, which is an essential skill as children move into reading content outside their own experience, is a skill equally essential for spelling.

Spelling and Written Composition. Whether the words for spelling study are selected from a standard list or from the content about which children need to write at any given time, experience in composing and writing is essential to good learning of spelling. The more use the child makes in his writing of the words he is learning to spell, the more quickly he achieves secure mastery. The greater the child's interest in writing, the more practice and the more attention he gives to the mastery of spelling. The more closely the writing he does in school resembles the writing he does or sees others do in life outside of school, the more likely he is to master the spelling of words he needs to use.

Children recognize early in their work in spelling that inaccurate and illegible letter formation may be interpreted as inaccurate spelling. Legible handwriting and correct punctuation together with correct spelling help insure accurate interpretation on the part of the reader.

Spelling and the Content Subjects. Needs for writing which occur in the study of any of the content areas tend to motivate and to reinforce the learning of spelling. Writing for permission for a school trip, listing questions for which answers are sought, and recording what is learned may give meaningful practice in using certain words commonly needed in letter writing and in simple recording. Writing original "story problems" to be solved in arithmetic class calls for careful use of language and accurate spelling. Recording a science experiment or



Courtesy, University School, Ohio State Univ., Columbus

Needs for writing which occur in the study of any of the content areas tend to motivate and to reinforce the learning of spelling.

taking notes for a report in social studies may cause a child to give careful attention to the spelling of key words in his source book. It has been found that a large number of words are learned by children before they appear in study lists. A great deal of progress in spelling takes place apart from spelling lessons.

What Words and How Many?

During the period when children learned to spell from Webster's blue-backed speller, they learned to spell great numbers of words for which they had no possible use. But they learned

little or nothing about science, health, social studies and much that is of vital importance today. The time devoted to spelling had to be curtailed when other emphases crept into the curriculum. As the elementary school curriculum became crowded, it was essential that every element included in it be studied for its value both to children and to adults.

Selection of Words to Teach. Extensive studies by Horn, Thorndike, and others provided evidence regarding the words most often used by adults in all walks of life. Fitzgerald and Rinsland have made intensive studies of the words

children have occasion to write both in and out of school. The evidence on the writing needs of adults indicates which words children should be able to spell when they leave school. The studies of the words children need to write help to determine what words should be learned at various age levels within the school. Both groups of studies are used as the basis for lists in spelling textbooks. They also serve as reference and check lists for schools which derive their spelling lists from the children's daily needs.

Most spelling books today contain not more than 4000 words in their basic lists. Some provide additional lists for supplementary lessons and for the use of able spellers who can go beyond the class. It is quite probable that schools which derive their own lists teach a smaller number of words.

Horn has called attention to the fact that little is to be gained by teaching large numbers of words. Two thousand words and their repetition make up 95.05 percent of the running words in adult writing; 3000 words constitute 96.9 percent; 4000 words, 97.8 percent; and 10,000 constitute 99.4 percent. The gain in teaching additional words diminishes rapidly with each additional 1000 and raises doubt as to the value of teaching more than 3000 or 4000 words.

According to Hildreth, Folger tabulated frequency of word usage in the Rinsland vocabulary list compiled from material written by children. He found that 10 words comprise about 25 percent of all the words in children's written material, 25 words more than 36 percent, 100 words over 60 percent, 500 words over 82 percent, 1000 words over 89 percent, and 2000 words over 95 percent. Ten thousand words is a fair estimate of the average person's lifetime writing needs. If children in the elementary school can master 2000 to 2500

basic words, learn how to build other forms from them, and learn to use a dictionary efficiently, they will be able to add the specialized vocabulary they need for social or vocational purposes later.

If the emphasis in teaching is placed on the primary objective—that of helping each child to develop an effective method of learning spelling—then the smaller list appears completely adequate. Children who are given rich experiences with all the phases of the language arts, who enjoy reading and read widely and well, who enjoy writing and try to express their thinking in clear and convenient form for others to read, will learn the rest of the spelling they need as they need it. Emphasis on methods of self-help throughout the period of learning spelling will encourage children to set high standards for themselves.

Grade Placement of Words. There is little agreement among the writers of spelling textbooks both as to which words should be included in the elementary-school lists and as to grade placement of the selected words. Betts compared the lists in 17 spellers published between 1934 and 1940 and also 8 spellers published since 1940. Only about 500 words are agreed upon by all writers of spelling texts, and overlapping from book to book amounts to only about 25 percent. Beyond the first 2000 words there is little agreement and still less agreement on the grade placement of the words.

Unless a word is needed at a given grade level and therefore receives considerable practice through actual use, it may not be mastered at that grade level. It is common to find children in the fifth and sixth grades laboring to learn words for which they have little use while they are still misspelling words they need but have had no help with since earlier grades. The overlap from grade to grade

is too slight to bring about permanent learning.

Children differ in the rate and ease with which they learn and also in the words they need at any given time. Uniform lists for all children ignore their obvious differences in learning capacity and need. The child who has much to say in writing and writes easily will need more words than the child who has little to say and poorly writes that little. His linguistic maturity, not his grade level, should determine which words a child is expected to study.

The frequency with which words are written in a given grade is the most important criterion for the selection of words for that grade. The more frequently a child has need for a word the more attention and practice it receives and the sooner it will be learned. It is also true that once a child has learned to spell a word, he tends to use it more readily in his writing and the more words he can spell the easier writing becomes. There is always the unanswered question of how much time and effort should be put into the learning of words children use frequently but which have little use in adult writing and how much time and attention should be given to words children rarely use but which are important in adult writing. Here again, helping each child to develop effective techniques for learning the words he finds he needs seems to offer the best results.

Methods of Teaching Spelling

Probably the great majority of elementary teachers in the country set aside a definite daily period for the study of spelling and use a textbook both for the words to be studied and the method by which they are studied. Some teachers draw their word lists entirely from children's writing but plan a definite time

for study. Some combine both of the above sources for material and method. A few teachers may rely entirely on incidental spelling to bring the needed results.

Beginning Steps in Spelling. A child's first spelling in the primary grades is almost always incidental. Since his writing experience begins with dictating, not with manipulating a pencil, he becomes aware of letters as elements which make up words as he watches his words appear on the chalkboard under the teacher's hand.

It is psychologically sound in any area of teaching to present an idea or skill in situations which make its use and value clear and to do it well ahead of the time when intensive work is to be instituted leading to mastery. This is true of reading, of writing and spelling, of dictionary work, and the use of other self-help resources. Children may learn to spell a number of words in first grade if occasions arise where words are needed and the need recurs frequently enough. Systematic attention to spelling begins in second grade in most schools.

Motivation. Regardless of how spelling is handled in a classroom, the attitude of the child toward learning spelling determines in large measure how much he learns. The interest a child takes in spelling will determine the standard he sets for himself and effort he will put forth to achieve it. Teachers talk of developing a "spelling conscience"—the realization that spelling matters, that one is painting a picture of himself as he turns out material for others to read, and that poor spelling can bring its own penalty in adult life in failure to obtain opportunities or even in loss of job. Children need to see immediate uses for what they learn and achieve immediate satisfaction. The younger and more immature an indi-

vidual is the less able he is to work toward long deferred goals. He needs to see progress as the result of his efforts.

Most children enjoy assuming some responsibility for their learning. If they help to set their own goals and are given some freedom and responsibility in the meeting of them, they find satisfaction in growth. If the things they write have meaning for them and the values are apparent, they can learn to take pride in correct spelling and to proofread their material to catch any errors.

Emphasis on mutual helpfulness in working toward goals is more valuable than competition. Morale tends to be high when children see value in what they are doing and find personal satisfaction in it.

Time Allotment for Spelling. Researchers appear to agree that 75 minutes per week is adequate time for work on spelling and perhaps even less will suffice. As is true with any situation that requires strict attention and intensive practice, short periods of carefully planned and intensive concentration are better than longer periods which permit dawdling and mind wandering. Children should learn to think of spelling periods as periods of skill-sharpening as well as periods for mastery of specific material. They should learn to work toward effective techniques which bring results with economy of time and effort.

Helping Children to Recognize Their Needs. Teachers who draw the words for spelling study from children's immediate writing needs have to decide which words children should put in their spelling notebooks for study and which they should be given and allowed to copy.

If a second-grade child needs the word *boy* or *can*, the teacher will have him record the word in his notebook so that he can work on the word at a time set aside for spelling. If he asks for the

word *Wednesday* or *Indianapolis*, the teacher will write it for him and let him copy it.

A number of spelling authorities believe that each new spelling lesson which deals with a specific list of words should begin with a test to determine what words each child knows and what words he needs to study. Horn especially advocates that pre-tests be given and that they be corrected by the pupil himself. He holds that through the very act of correcting his test paper, a child may learn some words without further study. For those words which require study, the child is assured that he is wasting no time studying words he already knows. Discovering his mistakes, Horn believes, provides motivation for learning to spell those words correctly. The pre-test also helps the teacher to see where to put his efforts—which words are hardest and which children need most help.

As soon as children can write independently with any ease, they should be taught to proofread all material they expect others to read and, if necessary, take it to the teacher for a final proofreading. This procedure helps children to become conscious of their own errors and to develop a feeling of responsibility for correctness.

Steps in Learning to Spell a Word. People differ in their methods of recalling the spelling of a word. Some remember the visual image of it, some say the syllables to themselves noting the sound pattern, others write the word and decide whether it looks right. Children, too, have differing degrees of sensory awareness and ability to stow away images of words. Consequently, all spelling methods emphasize more than one sensory approach to spelling. Dolch, Fitzgerald, Horn, and others agree that a multiple sense approach is important, that vision, hearing, speech, and writing

should all be used in learning to spell. Fitzgerald lists five steps which should be taken in learning to spell a word: (1) meaning and pronunciation; (2) imagery—seeing and saying the word, syllable by syllable and spelling it; (3) recall—closing eyes, spelling, checking for correctness; (4) writing the word and checking for correctness; (5) mastery—writing and checking or repeating the entire process until the word is learned.

Some authorities, from their studies, are convinced that the unit for observation and study in spelling should be the whole word or the syllable, not the letter. A child in writing the word *interested* would be taught to think and write it syllable by syllable, rather than by separate letters.

Children who learn spelling easily will not long continue to use all the steps in the suggested method. They will discover which elements or steps are of most worth to them and minimize or cease to use the others. Poor spellers may need a great deal of guidance and encouragement while they learn what adaptations of method are best for them and what reinforcement they need in order to attain mastery. Every child's interest in spelling is greatly increased when he learns an efficient method for studying spelling.

Shall We Teach Spelling Rules? The question of teaching spelling rules is one on which authorities disagree. The trend for some time has been in the direction of fewer rules than were once used. Horn recommends the teaching of only those rules that apply to a large number of words and have few exceptions. All rules should be developed inductively. Certainly, no rule should be taught unless it covers a sufficient number of words to pay for the effort of learning it, and only then if children are

mature enough to apply where needed.

Phonics and Spelling. Most of the research studies in phonics deal with reading rather than spelling. There has been much discussion of the contribution phonics can make to spelling but little real research evidence. In fact, research has done more to call attention to the limitations of phonics from the point of view of spelling than to indicate its values. More evidence is needed on the extent to which phonics rules and generalizations can be applied in spelling the common words of English that children need to learn. Certainly it has value at some points, such as in building words about a known element—*and, in, ing*, for example. But most of children's misspellings when they write stories and letters without adult guidance are phonetic. The child spells the word as it sounds to him, without regard to conventional spelling requirements.

Learning to use a dictionary is an essential part of learning to spell in the middle and upper grades. Picture dictionaries and the simple files or lists of new words that primary teachers use introduce children to the matter of alphabetizing. Helping children to meet their own spelling needs through the use of the dictionary in the back of the spelling textbook and to use larger dictionaries suited to their needs is an important part of basic teaching.

Special Needs Call for Special Techniques. Several people have called attention to the needs of children with serious spelling problems. Fernald, Fitzgerald, Horn, and Hildreth give suggestions for diagnosing spelling problems and remedying them. All studies of spelling disability indicate that children who have severe problems in learning spelling need help with building clear-cut images of words. Most of these children need to work for clear visual images

through looking carefully at words as they think the meaning and say the word. They need to say the word many times to hear the sound and to feel it on the tongue. They need to write the word as a whole as they think it, say it, and visualize it. Auditory, visual, speech-motor, and hand-motor impressions tend to reinforce one another and make the image clear and deep enough so that the child can retain it. And there must be practice and review. Children who have difficulty with spelling need many repetitions of words through using them in writing. Mere practice with lists or exercises in workbooks is not enough. Only through use in meaningful content can children make words really a part of themselves.

Evaluation in Spelling

Poor achievement in spelling is usually associated with a low level of achievement in other aspects of language learning. Evaluation of spelling must begin and end with evaluation of the total growth of a child—his attitude toward himself, his confidence in his own ability to learn, as well as his interest in writing and his concept of the importance of spelling.

Teaching and evaluating are not separate functions but operate together. As the teacher helps children learn to spell he analyzes their problems, studies their needs for help with sensory perception

and with means of remembering. He observes the level on which the child operates and plans next steps for him. Far too much of the time allotted to spelling in many classrooms is spent in assigning and testing and too little in guiding and teaching.

Standardized tests have a place in the evaluation program if they test what children have had opportunity to learn. Most children learn some spelling without direct teaching so a standardized test, compared with a test on the words the children have actually studied, may indicate the power a child is gaining in spelling.

The real test of spelling achievement is not what children can do when their attention is centered on spelling. Rather, it is what they do with spelling when it is used as a vehicle for expression and their attention is centered on what they are trying to express. The more opportunities children have for writing things that are important to them, the more value they see in spelling. And the more value they see in spelling the more readily they learn it. The real need is to help each child to see his need for spelling and to help him master techniques through which he can learn with confidence and economy of effort. These are the points which appear to stand out most clearly as one studies the available research.

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Traveling with Insight

Interesting travel stories are coming from every part of the world. This trip taken by May Kedney seemed particularly intriguing. When we asked her to write it she felt she could report it best by telling it to her friend Norma Law who has written it.

THE URGE TO CREATE IS A STRONG AND moving force. It challenges us to be different. It pushes us to adventure. It insists that we think with our whole being. Creativity is not confined to the arts. Neither does it blossom only in special places. It can go around the world with us if we travel with insight.

May's major interest lay in the Inca civilization, and the Indian culture which she hoped to discover in the heart of Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador. She read everything about the Indians in South America—books, magazine articles, commercial brochures, letters, newspapers. The spiritual arts of music, literature, and painting gave her clues to the philosophy of the people. Books invited her to share the feelings of the Indian people in the past and today. Short stories familiarized her with folk humor and favorite idioms of speech. Gradually the territory to be visited broadened, and a framework of decisions regarding what to look for began to develop.

The plan to cover as much territory as possible was rejected for the intimate visiting of a few places where she might get depth of understanding by letting her interests explore more deeply as opportunities presented themselves for

a variety of contacts and for repeated associations with the same people. Neither did she want to plan so rigidly that she wouldn't be able to discover anything after she left home.

She secured information about prices and schedules from steamship, airline, and railroad companies and from a travel agent. She used both services for making the most important reservations. The information bureaus of different countries sent her countless materials about travel within their borders. Well-written guide books were read.

She made many personal contacts in advance—names of friends, letters of introduction, student visitors to this country, and information about fellow-Americans living and working in South America. Even though she didn't get to look up many of these people, knowing their names gave her a certain neighborly security, and it also gave her folks at home a feeling of safety. For with every traveler affectionately go the earthbound ones at home.

All but the seasoned travelers have "butterflies" when it comes to the actual moments of take-off, of facing customs, of asking for something in another language. Many emergencies have to be met as they come but some can be avoided. For instance, it helps to know how to count the money of the country, to be informed about the rates of exchange, and to use traveler's checks. To

May Kedney is an associate professor of art, Skidmore College, Saratoga, New York. Norma Law is an associate in the Bureau of Child Development and Parent Education with the Division of Elementary Education, Education Department, Albany, New York.

have common idioms of the language easily on the tongue is another useful preparation.

To go alone seemed a most desolate arrangement to some of her friends. However, May said she thought traveling by herself would be easier, and now she reports that it was. "It made me more self-reliant and at the same time more dependent upon the very people I wanted to get to know better." It also left her free to explore her own interests and in her own way.

Because she wanted to be able to move easily about the countryside and to visit places not always accessible by first-rate transportation, May traveled with a minimum of luggage (one suitcase, one overnight bag) which she could handle herself. Because she was not seeking Americans, she deliberately sought out pensions where no Americans were staying. "People who want to be with Americans should stay at home," is her way of putting it. However, this feeling did not prevent her from getting help from American agencies if she were temporarily confused. She always registered with the American consulate immediately upon arrival in a new country. Their recommendations were important to know; the cultural attache was often able to help her plan locally.

Identifying with a new environment takes time, but May found that every minute spent in getting information was orienting. The people were anxious to please a traveler who asked questions and was making an effort to learn. Their answers always helped find the good teachers to whom she might turn again and again. At first she was reluctant to use her very poor and very few words of Spanish until she discovered how much her trying to use the language was appreciated no matter how awkward the effort.

Because she likes to walk, she did much of her exploring on foot, constantly consulting her map. In that way territory once discovered was available for ready reference another time. The guidebook was re-read every night. Taxis were taken only where necessary because riding to the ends of public transportation lines proved such a satisfactory method for getting acquainted with people and places. The business of buying stamps and mailing her own letters was another public service that enriched her knowledge of the local community.

Eating local food introduced her not only to strange dishes but to good conversation. It was as though her willingness to share their menu became a test of people's approval and acceptance. That and being herself with strangers no matter how brief the encounter.

It was to Cuzco, once the heart of the Inca civilization and the old Indian capital of Peru, that she went first. This had been her original destination. She saw the ruins as a tourist in a few days but continued to see them the whole month. She introduced herself to Dr. Hays, director of the demonstration schools under Point 4. On horseback she and Dr. Hays visited several of his "nucleo" schools where educational methods appropriate to the Indian society were being developed. The opportunities to talk and to see and to listen to children, teachers, parents, and other citizens grew.

At Huancayo, May met Francisca Mayer and her family. Francisca had been a weaver there for eight years. She had left Germany at the beginning of the war. It was with Francisca that she first hiked to Aco, a small village where the Indians made all the water jars for the valley. In a letter describing the day she ended with, "Everyone was so cordial and gracious it gave me the

courage to make such excursions on my own."

Apparently one of the most pleasant of these was to Orcotuna where they were having a festival "en gloria de San Francisco." A later letter told of that journey: "I caught an 8 AM train to San Geronimo. I started to walk across the valley on a road Francisca and I had taken on our previous trip. Three men came running to tell me to take a more direct route (they had heard me tell an old woman on the train that I was going to a fiesta at Orcotuna, and of course a 'Gringo' stands out in any situation) and showed me a little path leading between two abode walls. I hadn't gone far when a man on a bike came along, got off and walked with me. We talked and when we came to a break in the wall he told me to take a short cut across the field and he'd meet me on the other side. Sure enough he was there. We crossed the bridge and once on the direct road into town he excused himself and went on his way. Meanwhile a family had caught up with me and we walked together the rest of the way.

"Each village has two plazas; the one in front of the church has trees, benches, walks, and flowers; the other is empty, used for market fiestas, and bull fights. I headed for the second to see if the potter of Aco had brought a small jar I'd asked him to make. Everyone had said of course he wouldn't but I had maintained he had said he would with great sincerity. As he was ill, it had been brought by his brother. I bought it and started back across the square to buy oranges. I spied a black manta with brilliant orange and pink stripes, 'Just what I had been looking for.' The woman said she'd sell it and began to remove the peas and carrots. All gathered about to see what price the Gringo paid. While making the transaction one old crone

picked up my pocketbook and because of its weight remarked, 'So much money?' Much to their surprise I showed them my Spanish dictionary, camera, and a few bananas. One old gal grabbed the jar and wrapped it in the manta and showed me how to carry it on my back as they did. We all got a good laugh out of that.

"On across the square I greeted a cute little woman, 'Buenos dias. Como esta?' and she started talking, saying that the fiesta would not begin before 11 AM and that I should come home with her. We walked several blocks, she unlocked the galvanized iron doors and there was her home, just as messy and dirty as she was clean.

"Leading back to several rooms was a runway with a place for chickens, sheep, burro, and a little pig pen snuggled up close to the house. She cleaned off a chair for me to sit on and offered me a banana. I was so thankful it was something I could peel and eat without worrying about germs.

"Somehow my timidity at speaking such poor Spanish always vanishes when I'm out with the Indians. They seem to fathom what I'm trying to say. Clementine Gutierrez, for that was her name, showed me a fine manta and skirt she had woven saying she used these when she worked in the fields (she had on a machine-made blouse, skirt, and manta). I asked if she had children and she said only one boy and it was so sad because he lived in Lima and she seldom saw him. She brought out a picture of him taken some years before in city clothes. She asked where my husband and family were (they cannot understand how any woman can travel alone, much less not be married or have children). She asked me to stay for dinner saying that she was going to have baked guinea pig and many vegetables. I spoke to her of the vegetables I liked and mentioned that I

thought the South American potato had much more flavor than ours. She hopped up and brought me a hot boiled potato and wrapped it in a piece of paper for my lunch as I had explained that I'd come to see the fiesta and I'd better return to the plaza. She walked back with me carrying a little wire basket (like the French use for lettuce) with a zipper plastic bag in it. She said she liked to keep her vegetables fresh.

"By now many arches (constructed of wire, wood, and crepe paper) had been placed about the plaza—also altars of more elaborate design. Many stalls for drinking and sitting had been put up against the buildings. One man with an electric motor was making fruit juice drinks and doing a thriving business. We sat in Clementine Gutierrez' friend's stall. I was introduced to everyone as they came along and she would relate to them our conversation. She left me for a few minutes to buy vegetables and returned with a small colorful pot for me, as a doll-size souvenir of the day. Soon after she left with a hearty embrace of the South American variety. I wandered into the plaza to see what was going on. They had put up two arches before the church entrance. At the side-front of each a man had placed two taborets and was arranging calla lilies with great care. Soon after he left, another man came along and removed them, putting in their place two horrid plaster saints with electric light bulbs coming out of the top of their heads.

"I sat down on the curb to watch. Three little girls came and sat down with me. I bought them ice creams and they were mine for the day. With their chattering, I learned many new words. Soon the musicians (harps, violins, and drums) and dancers came. The dancers were masked, some dressed in heavily embroidered satin pants and skirts,

others in commercial effects. It was funny to see the men's large and heavy shoes below this regalia. Over and over they did the same awkward steps. We walked about the plaza with them. One little man had them stop whenever I wanted to snap a picture. After several of these groups had come and gone, I again sat.

"By now my coat lapel looked like a kiosk for I had so many papers pinned on me in recognition of votives or prayers or something I'd bought from older girls. They came also to sit and ask how to say this or that, and count in English. Some began to count. Before long there was a sea of faces about me—children in silk, in rags, some carrying a small sister or brother on their backs. Older people on the outer fringe kept telling the newcomers about 'La Gringita' being a teacher in the United States. I'll never forget all those eyes.

"A blare of bugles announced the religious procession; first came banners and standards accompanied by women in purple dresses, carrying large lighted candles. Then came San Geronimo borne on the backs of chosen attendants. Not knowing one saint from another, I snapped my last picture much to the horror of two boys standing next to me, for San Francisco was yet to come.

"After the procession I took off for Sicaya, a nearby village I wished to visit. Two boys accompanied me to the edge of town, wishing to show me the right road."

Always there were guides to good adventure among the people wherever she went. She had trusted that there would be from the beginning. And there were. The opportunity to meet folks, to discover that there are no strangers, is the vitality of travel. Insight comes with these satisfactions of kinship and an intimate sense of place.

concerns for children are worldwide

. . . In the Federal Republic of Germany

By RUDOLF DAHMEN

In response to our request "What are one or two of the things the Federal Republic of Germany is doing in its concern for children?" we have this story of children's playgrounds in the Federal Republic. Indeed these sound like havens of rest and security for children which may inspire communities all over the world.

SHORTLY BEFORE CROSSING THE STREET IN A large city in the Federal Republic, a small, chubby hand unexpectedly pushes its way into that of a grownup and the trusting voice of a 4 year old asks: "Please, will you take me across the street?"

This episode demonstrates the existence of a child in a large city: He can't move around at will for he runs the risk of falling a prey to traffic—and in a broader sense, to the dangers of a large city. A contemporary, noted German pedagogue once said that: "The generations must go through the jungle hand in hand." This aptly expresses the situation as it exists for the inhabitants of a large city, children and adults alike.

Health through Play

The main task is to create for children in the large cities a way out of the dangerous, tense atmosphere prevailing in the streets; children need havens of quiet and security where they can play unmolested. Thus, a few years have sufficed to make the *playground movement* in the Federal Republic a concern of the entire people. In this connection, modern pediatrics opened up new vistas and taught us to regard the play of a child in connection with his health, and to use playing as a means to further his physical well-being.

Also in districts with more favorable living conditions, the customary small gardens are only sufficient for the very young; but for the older children they are too small to play in. So additional playgrounds are being laid out which are big enough to allow the parents to join the children if they wish to do so. Municipalities are requested to make available playing and sports grounds measuring at least 3.5 to 4.5 square metres per head of the population. In general, playgrounds in

Germany are for the common use of all age groups with the exception of the very young. Such an arrangement—the bringing together of different age groups—promotes harmony like in a big family. Furthermore the older brother or sister usually must look after the younger child, so that practically they have to use the same playground.

Admit Grownups Only with Children

Since playgrounds should supplement not replace family life, parents ought to be given the opportunity to play together with their children on these playgrounds. In some places in the Federal Republic, notices are put up with the inscription: Grownups only admitted in the company of children.

As a rule, the center of the playground is a free grass plot to be used for running around, for ball games and, in some cases, also for folk dances. Gym appliances are near at hand but set apart, including climbing ropes and rings, sometimes also horizontal bars, swings, whirligigs, and in some cases also small merry-go-rounds, and slides. Specially well appointed playgrounds also have a roller skating rink which, in winter, can be converted into an ice skating rink. Frequently, too, special grounds are set apart for ball games. Soil conditions permitting, a special corner of the playground serves for the very young to dig and play in the sand.

A Derelict Car Is Prized

If possible, special equipment is set up to encourage children to use their imagination when playing, for instance, an old rowboat, or an immobile old car in which hand and foot brakes as well as the gas pedal must still function. Obstacle courses for crawling, climbing, and jumping are also great favorites. Toys that should be available are balls, skipping ropes, Badminton rackets and shuttlecocks, spades, and wheelbarrows.

Rudolf Dahmen is a journalist in Bonn, Germany.

The costs for the laying out of a good playground of 6000 square metres, and equipped like the one just described, would amount in Germany to about DM 30,000; this sum is increased by another DM 20,000 if it includes a shed serving as a room for an attendant—which is absolutely necessary if the playground is equipped with movable appliances and as a storage place. In addition, there is a roofed-over shelter.

Naturally, it is often necessary to lay out playgrounds under far less favorable conditions, for instance, if they are located down town. If possible, roofed-over areas required in such cases are built to shelter more persons than those in the suburbs. The downtown playgrounds have their sandboxes instead of the suburban "digging corners" and the gym appliances are smaller. On the other hand, terraria and aquaria are the special features of the downtown playgrounds.

Four Examples

The following examples will illustrate what Germany has achieved with regard to the setting up of playgrounds:

In the "Louisapark" in *Frankfurt Main* a children's playground covering more than 6 acres was set up. While the old trees were left standing, a large lawn was laid out. A number of amusing gym appliances in the shape of animals were set up. They were made of wood instead of the customary iron and thus fit into the parklike surroundings. A particular favorite is the pool in which the children can splash about. In addition, 80 benches, many of them with tables, were set up. A wooden fence surrounds the area. There are lavatories, a bicycle shed, and a wooden house for storage purposes, and a snack-bar.

In the extensive *Karlsaue Park* at *Kassel* the so-called "Snail's shell" was laid out. This is an artificial, grass-covered mound around which a sand-playground is arranged in spirals like a snail's shell.

In pre-war *West-Berlin* there were 250 children's playgrounds. By 1945, 80 percent of them had been destroyed. Today, Berlin has more than 470 public playgrounds to which more than 500 located in private residential settlements must be added. It is only natural that the most densely populated districts—*Wedding*, *Schoeneberg*, *Kreuzberg*—have the greatest number of playgrounds. The equipment varies: lawns and thick hedges surround the sandboxes for the very young

children—these are particularly pretty in the *Tiergarten* where long chairs have been put up for the mothers. For the 2 to 6 year olds, small tables have been set up in the sandboxes and they have animals of wood or stone on which to ride and climb about. The 6 to 14 year olds have poles and trees on which to climb, crawling tracks, balancing poles, swings, and seesaws. There are only few pools for children to splash around in. Instead, the Berlin playgrounds have shallow stone basins with water spouts that are turned on in the hot season.

Ships from Wooden Boards

A short time ago, a playground covering an area of more than 3 acres was opened in *Bielefeld*. It has a large grass plot for ball games surrounded by trees and shrubs, and fixed and movable sports appliances. The latter include self-made climbing poles, wooden snakes on which to balance, wooden ships and cars, seesaws, whirligigs and merry-go-rounds. On the edge of this large grass plot there is a playground for children with sandboxes, a merry-go-round for the tots, a seesaw, and other appliances. The part reserved for the grownups has a lawn with a flagstone walk and flower beds and a roofed-over shelter against the sun, opening onto the playground from which it is separated by a low wall. Benches for adults have been put up on the infants playground and elsewhere.

A report from the Municipal Administration reads: "We believe that gym appliances and toys are particularly important because they attract the children to the playgrounds who would otherwise play on the street, since they like to be where there is something going on. The appliances are even more important in winter to compensate for the many hours children spend at school and sitting at home. Sandboxes are not suited for that purpose. We have 50 public playgrounds. This figure does not include the playgrounds of the Building Society and similar organizations."

These examples may suffice to show that in the Federal Republic, too, there is much interest and understanding to be found for the needs of youth, and that imagination and the faculty to make use of the prevailing local conditions have combined to produce playgrounds which are liked by the children as well as by the grownups and which afford them the necessary recreation.



new fall books for young readers **harcourt, brace**

SEE AND SAY By Antonio Frasconi

Simple objects are pictured in full color by a leading woodcut artist, and the word for each (with pronunciation) is given in English, Italian, French, and Spanish. Ages 4 up. \$3.00

DANCING IN THE MOON

By Fritz Eichenberg

Rolling nonsense rhymes, each with a full-page picture in three colors, make the numbers 1 to 20 unforgettable, in a companion book to *Ape in a Cape: An Alphabet of Odd Animals*. Ages 4-8. \$2.25

THE FABULOUS FIREWORK

FAMILY By James Flora

Brilliant-as-a-skyrocket story and pictures of a Mexican boy who longs to be a master firework maker. Illustrated by the author in full color and black-and-white. Ages 5-9. \$2.75

CHAGA By Will and Nicolas

Chaga the elephant is reduced to rabbit-size, and learns what it means to be small in a large world. Bold two-color pictures by Nicolas Mordvinoff, 1952 Caldecott Medal Winner. Ages 5-9. \$2.50

JASON AND TIMMY By Sally Scott

A hilarious story about a small boy who proves he can be a good sport when his brother allows him to join the older boys. Wash drawings by Beth Krush. Ages 6-10. \$2.00

THE BORROWERS AFIELD

By Mary Norton,
author of *The Borrowers*

The further adventures of Pod, Homily, and Arrietty in their new home among the roots of a tree are told in this eagerly awaited sequel to *The Borrowers*, which has sold over 37,000 copies. Line drawings by Beth and Joe Krush. Ages 8 up. \$2.50

ISLAND SECRET By Mildred Lawrence

Bonnie helps resettle the family on an island in Lake Erie after her father is reported mysteriously missing in the Far East. Drawings by Paul Galdone. Ages 9-12. \$2.75

TOMAHAWKS AND TROUBLE

By William O. Steele,
author of *Winter Danger*

A dramatic frontier story of three children captured by Indians and their eventual escape. Line drawings by Paul Galdone. Ages 8-12. \$2.50

TEXAS YANKEE:

The Story of Gail Borden

By Nina Brown Baker,
author of *Nickels and Dimes*

The success story of a N. Y. state farm boy who became a famous Texan and later discovered the secret of condensing milk. Drawings by Alan Moyler. Ages 9-12. \$2.50

PLAIN GIRL By Virginia Sorensen

Remarkable insight and understanding distinguish this story of an Amish girl and her first year in a public school. Drawings by Charles Geer. Ages 9-12. \$2.50

THE WICKED ENCHANTMENT

By Margot Benary-Israel,
author of *The Ark*

A troublesome mystery in an old German cathedral town is eventually solved by Anemone and her aunt. Drawings by Enrico Arno. Ages 10 up. \$2.50

GUNS FOR THE SARATOGA

By Stephen W. Meader

A young midshipman's adventures aboard the sloop-of-war *Saratoga* during the Revolution. Line drawings by John O'Hara Cosgrave II. Ages 12 up. \$2.75

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY, 383 Madison Ave., New York 17

NEWS and REVIEWS

News HERE and THERE . . .

By FRANCES HAMILTON

New ACE Branch

Irene McCrea Association for Childhood Education, Moline, Illinois

1955-1956 ACEI Fellow

ELIZABETH HAINES, a teacher in the public school of Hutchinson, Kansas, joined the



Elizabeth Haines

ACEI staff as the 1955-56 ACEI Fellow on August 1. Miss Haines is the special representative at ACEI Headquarters of all branch members and particularly of those from the Great Plains Region. She will attend meetings of the Executive Board, participate in conferences of groups interested in problems related to the education and well-being of children, assist with the work at ACEI Headquarters, and plan with Board and Staff for the 1956 Conference.

Miss Haines has been a first-grade teacher in the Hutchinson, Kansas, schools for the last seven years. Before teaching in Hutchinson, she taught in rural and consolidated schools of Kansas. She is a graduate of the Kansas State Teachers College at Emporia. ACE branch work has involved much of Miss Haines' interest. For three years she was president of the Hutchinson ACE and has served Kansas as an ACEI state representative. On the Kansas Council on Children and Youth, she has represented the Kansas ACE.

One of Miss Haines' first responsibilities as an ACEI Fellow has been participating in the summer meeting of the ACEI Executive Board and the 1955 Conference on Citizenship held in Washington in September.

The second Fellow to represent the Great

Plains Region, Miss Haines was selected from among those nominated by former Board Members in that region. The Fellow for 1956-57 will be chosen from the Southeast Region.

ACEI Staff Change

Erma Noble, Associate Secretary on the ACEI Headquarters Staff for the past two years, has resigned to return to Grand Rapids, Michigan. She will serve as principal of the Congress Elementary School in Grand Rapids. This change enables Miss Noble to do the thing she wishes most to do—to work closely with children every day.

A Home for ACEI

Definite plans for securing a permanent headquarters for ACEI are moving forward. The Steering Committee appointed last April has prepared an information sheet suggesting ways in which branches and individual members and friends of the Association may participate.

The October issue of the *ACEI Branch Exchange* carries the information sheet as an important supplement. Contributions to the Building Fund to date total \$18,595.09.

Bulletin Revised

Perhaps you have been waiting for the 1955 revision of *Equipment and Supplies*, published biennially by ACEI. The new edition contains suggested kinds and quantities of materials for working with children of various ages, all of which have been recommended by the six ACEI Test Centers throughout the United States and Canada. *Equipment and Supplies* is now available at ACEI, 1200-15th St., NW, Washington 5, D. C. Price: \$1.25.

American Education Week

The 35th annual observance of American Education Week is scheduled for November 6-12, 1955. The general theme for this year's observance is "Schools, Your Investment in America." American Education Week has been observed annually since 1921 for the purpose of informing the public of the accomplishments and needs of the public schools and secure the cooperation and support of the public in meeting these needs. Many

schools and communities have scheduled special activities centered on the community's and the school's investment in character building, in teachers, in classrooms, in fundamental learning, in better living, in a strong nation. For help needed in planning, write to the National Education Association, 1201-16th St., NW, Washington 6, D. C.

Teacher Exchange Program

Children in approximately 320 classrooms in the world will have richer experiences this fall because of the Teacher Exchange Program. One hundred and sixty teachers from England, Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Australia, New Zealand, Austria, Canada, Denmark, and Belgium are teaching in elementary and high schools in the United States during this school year. The 160 American teachers have exchanged places with them.

Plans are now being made for the continuing of this exchange program for another year. Between September 1 and October 15, 1955, applications are received for exchange teacher-ships and information given regarding the exchange program. Write for information now to the Teacher Exchange Section, Teacher Programs Branch, Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C.

UN Anniversary

The United Nations is ten years old this year. This anniversary is being observed by the nations which ten years ago joined together to sign the UN Charter. In June, a special celebration and commemoration was held in San Francisco. Representing ACEI at the meeting was Bernice Baxter of the Oakland, California, Public Schools.

UN Day will be celebrated on October 24. The theme for UN Day activities is "The UN Works for You." ACEI is cooperating in the planning as a member of the Educational Association Advisory Subcommittee of the U.S. Committee for the UN. You can cooperate on the local level by working with other organizations to plan UN Tenth Anniversary programs in your community. Resource material is available from the United States Committee for the United Nations, 816 21st St., NW, Washington 6, D. C.

Message from the ACEI Executive Board

"The following statement appeared in 'The Annual Report of the Executive Secretary,'

William G. Carr, of the National Education Association for 1955:

"During the past year considerable study has been given to the NEA services in early elementary education. We have hoped that the Association for Childhood Education might decide to join forces with the NEA as a department. Such a move would have filled a gap in our service program. Since such affiliation is not now in sight, we are beginning to strengthen the NEA Department of Kindergarten-Primary Education."

"The Executive Board of ACEI is gratified to learn of this indication of concern for the educational welfare of young children. With the universal acceptance of the importance of the individual comes the necessity for providing good educational experiences for young children. This task demands the cooperative effort of many organizations. The NEA, representing the teaching profession of the United States, can exert a tremendous influence in providing children with improved opportunities for growing and learning.

"In considering this statement made by Dr. Carr, the Executive Board of the Association for Childhood Education International in August 1955, reviewed the long history of cooperation between the two organizations. The records revealed that there had been periodic consideration as to whether or not ACEI should become a department of NEA.

"The Board decided that the following major reasons arrived at in the past for declining the invitations are equally valid today and should be shared with the membership:

1. ACEI is international in name and increasingly so in its activities. The organization now has members in 39 countries.

2. Membership in ACEI is not confined to teachers, but includes parents, community workers, and others concerned with the education and welfare of children—two to twelve years of age. Affiliation of ACEI as a department of NEA, an organization composed largely of teachers, might exclude ACEI members who are not teachers.

3. Much of ACEI's strength and effectiveness lies in its unity of purpose and action by all concerned with the education and welfare of children. Since NEA has many departments there is some question as to whether ACEI could operate effectively within the framework of this organization without confusion and misunderstanding.

"While the Executive Board of the Association for Childhood Education International believes it wise for ACEI to continue as an independent organization, it is hoped that the two groups may continue to work informally, but closely, in all matters pertaining to the educational welfare of children."

What They're Saying About Johnny

WORDS AND YET MORE WORDS! PERHAPS YOU are surfeited already with comments on the book written by Rudolf Flesch, *Why Johnny Can't Read* (Harpers). What shall we do about this book? Shall we ignore it, abhor it, or use it—though perhaps in ways not intended by its dogmatic author? How can we be of most help to Johnny's parents, to other taxpayers who support the schools, to Johnny and all his fellows?

Many parents, because of honest concern for their children and for their schools, have read Mr. Flesch's book or excerpts from it. Some hail the volume as light in the darkness. The more thoughtful parents are asking questions. To teachers this offers an unexpected opportunity and challenge. We may talk with parents about present day practices in the teaching of reading and the research upon which these practices are based. We can talk with them about how these practices influence when and how their child will learn to read.

But before we talk with parents is there preparation we should make? Should our own information be increased? Should our thinking and reasoning be deepened? Is there recent research we should examine? Can our understanding of how children learn be further clarified? Do we need to re-think and re-evaluate our own experiences with children? Do we need to familiarize ourselves with what many people are saying about this book?

This seems the appropriate time and place to call attention to a few of the many reviews that have appeared in various kinds of publications. In discussing them you will be preparing to help worried parents to understand more clearly how today's capable teacher helps children gain competence in reading.

Time, June 20, carries news of the excitement created by *Why Johnny Can't Read*. The question, "How accurate is Flesch's gloomy picture?" is answered with statements from Ruth Dunbar's articles in the *Chicago Sun-Times*:¹

It is true, says Reporter Dunbar, that most schools have in the first grade abandoned the old phonic

(i.e., letter by letter and syllable by syllable) method of teaching a child to read in favor of the word method (i.e., teaching the child to recognize whole words by their appearance). But they have done so because, at the beginning, letters alone "are meaningless to the child. . . ." " . . . But after Johnny knows 50 to 100 words by sight, he begins to analyze the letters and sounds that make up words."

Child Study, 1955 Summer issue, presents a review by Leland Jacobs, Teachers College, Columbia University:

Teaching a child to read is surely more than applying a mechanical process of any sort, whether it be the word method, the sentence method, the ABC's, or phonics. A child reading is a child feeling and thinking—thinking thoughts, not just letter sounds.

The Reporter, May 5, 1955, carries a review by Fred M. Hechinger. From this balanced viewpoint of a skilled and thoughtful writer we can learn much:

Perhaps educators brought this on themselves. Certainly every teacher who condemns the Flesch attack on the current state of the teaching of reading and says that Flesch is wholly wrong and the school is wholly right will move me and thousands like me closer to the Flesch theory. But for the moment I find it hard to swallow the author's warning: "I say, therefore, that the word method is gradually destroying democracy in this country. . ."

Elementary English had editorials on the subject in the April and May 1955 issues. John J. DeBoer, though tactful, unhesitatingly points out some of the errors in Mr. Flesch's book:

Most serious of Mr. Flesch's errors is his outrageous oversimplification of the problem itself. To him reading consists exclusively of the power of word recognition. He does not refer to the problems of comprehension and interpretation of meaning derived from words in combination. Indeed he is not concerned even with the meaning of the individual words. (April)

In the May editorial Mr. DeBoer says: Harper's holds an honored place among publishers of America. Readers of its publications have a right to expect that its books meet the requirements of sound scholarship, and that its advertisements maintain reasonable standards of dignity.

National Parent-Teacher, May 1955, refers to Mr. Flesch's book. In the section, "What Is Happening in Education," William D. Boutwell, in addition to commenting on the contents, calls attention to qualifications of the author:

You don't accept a guide for an important journey without looking into his qualifications . . .

¹ Reprints may be obtained from Chicago Sun-Times Promotion Dept., 211 Wacker Dr., Chicago. 10¢ each.

Rudolf Flesch . . . has served as consultant to newspapers, magazines, and the U. S. government on ways of making writing readable. But Dr. Flesch up to now has focused on *adult* reading, not beginning reading. He writes, "A few weeks ago I spent two days in the library at Teachers College, Columbia University, tracking down every single reference to a study of *phonics vs. no phonics*." Two days, Dr. Flesch! And his book, which blasts reading instruction currently used, discloses that he has devoted only a few months to research that has occupied the attention of other specialists for a lifetime.

CTA Journal, California Teachers Association, May 1955, carries this article, "We Have Remedial Reading in Europe, Too." The author, Bjorn Karlson, born in Norway, was a teacher in the elementary schools of that country. He came to the United States in 1949 for study at the University of Minnesota. His doctoral dissertation is on remedial reading. In his article he offers a significant reply to Mr. Flesch's statement, "There are no remedial reading cases . . . practically anywhere in the world except in the United States."

Karlson states:

Research in the United States has revealed that 10 to 15 percent of all school children are reading disability cases, with boys outnumbering girls by about three to one. In a very extensive study in England (15,515 cases) F. J. Schonell found that 12 percent were reading disability cases . . . M. E. Hill, also in England, found that 13 to 15 percent of 2900 children were reading cases. Hallgren, in Sweden, estimated that 10 percent of all Swedish school children are cases of specific reading disability. Similar figures, depending upon the definition of a reading disability case, are found in other countries.

The Research Division, National Education Association, during May 1955 gave limited distribution to an 18-page review by Arthur I. Gates, Teachers College, Columbia University. The author presents material that should be read by teachers, by parents, and most assuredly by Mr. Flesch:

If parents should believe that the methods now being used in the schools and supported by the leading scholars in the field are as Mr. Flesch describes, they would indeed be justified in criticizing them. It is, therefore, necessary to show that the views which Mr. Flesch attributes to these people are not at all the ones they hold and to demonstrate that the practices in American schools are not at all those he describes.

. . . A third fault of the Flesch type of phonic instruction is that children are not given guidance and instruction in many other techniques which make for efficient, quick and accurate word recognition . . . The Flesch procedure provides instruction in only part of those skills that are essential for the development of a really expert reader.

Mary E. Leeper is Executive Secretary Emeritus, ACEI.

Education, May 1955, contains an article "What About Phonics?" by Emmett Betts that should be read in connection with reviews of the Flesch volume. Reprints may be obtained for 35¢ from: Betts Reading Clinic, 257 W. Montgomery Ave., Haverford, Pa. Under the subhead "How to Confuse Children" Betts says:

Drill the child on the rote memorization of the alphabet before he goes to school. If this practice doesn't confuse him, it may give him the idea that reading is the memorization of letters. By the time his reading group is ready for the primer, he will be completely lost.

Seven other tongue-in-cheek ideas follow.

Then Dr. Betts adds:

The above is a listing of some of the things which parents—and some teachers—do to give children mixed-up feelings regarding reading. If these children are emotionally disturbed before they start to read, they are really "undone" after these experiences. If they are not quite ready for reading when they have these weird and awful experiences with written words, they become fugitives from books.

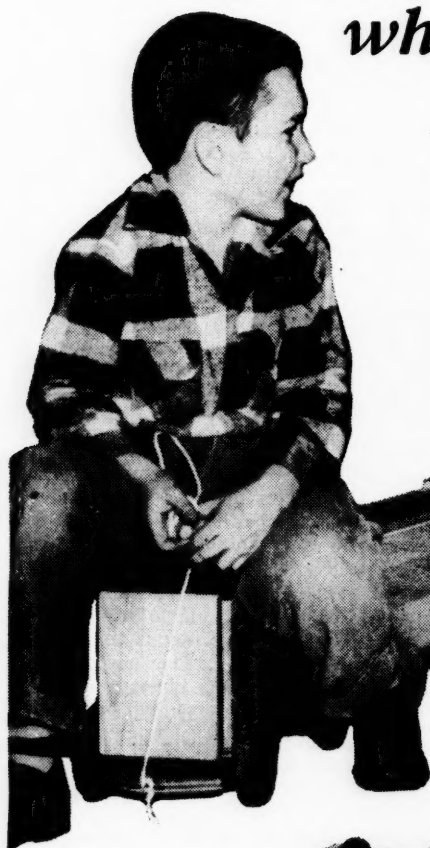
Parents' Magazine, June 1955, has an article titled, "Who Says Johnny Can't Read?" The authors, Florence Beaumont and Adele Franklin, experienced and well-known educators in New York City, address themselves directly to parents. They show understanding of the concern of parents who ask, "Are our children learning to read?" They say that "The school's answer is an emphatic and unequivocal 'Yes.'" They then support their views with facts and illustrations:

Now ability to read depends on many things. One of the most important is that the muscles of the eyes must be able to focus on the printed page. This is a process that cannot be hurried. It has no relationship to intelligence.

HERE IS A PROBLEM ON WHICH GROUPS, ACE and others, can work—a topic that demands discussion and the sharing of experiences. Committees will be needed to uncover pertinent research; to discover, clip and use reviews and comments; to find out from children *their* answers to some of the questionable assertions made in this questionable book; to prepare articles for local papers; to develop exhibits and filmstrips that will help people understand how the efficient teacher in today's school teaches Johnny—and Susan and Mary.

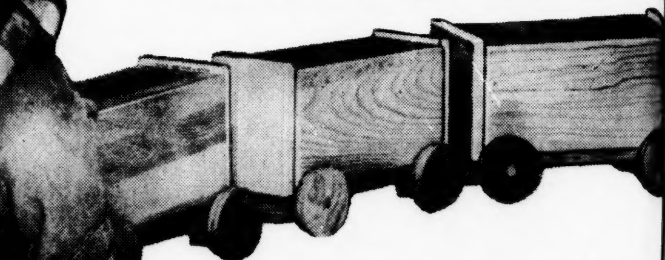
Let us use Mr. Flesch's book in ways not intended by the author but rather as an invitation to further study, a stimulus to professional thinking, an incentive to serious discussion, a springboard to a more understanding interpretation of today's school.

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89

Books for Children . . .

Editor, CHRISTINE B. GILBERT

A LITTLE OVEN. *Written and illustrated by Eleanor Estes. New York: Harcourt, 383 Madison Ave., 1955. Unp., \$2.25.* A little French girl and an American girl become friends, and when the little French girl requests her mother for a little loving and a little hugging, she pronounced it "a little 'ovin'." This led to considerable confusion, especially when her mother tried to satisfy her by buying her a tiny oven. This is a warmhearted story of the friendship between two children and of the tender relationship between a mother and her child. *Ages: 4 to 8.*

THEODORE TURTLE. *By Ellen MacGregor. Illustrated by Paul Galdone. New York: Whittlesey House, 330 W. 42nd St., 1955. Pp. 32, \$2.* The author of the popular "Miss Pickerell" series of books for older children wrote this humorous picture book for younger children before her untimely death. Children will love the repetitive story of Mr.

Theodore Turtle and will chuckle over his ability to forget where he leaves his possessions, and then, when he finds them, his exclamation "Wasn't I clever to think of that!" The fire at the end of the story seems unnecessary and prevents the use of the book with very young children. *Ages: 4 to 8.*

WORLD FULL OF HORSES. *Written and illustrated by Dahlov Ipcar. New York: Doubleday, 575 Madison Ave., 1955. Unp., \$2.50.*

WONDERFUL THINGS! *Written and illustrated by Zhenya Gay. New York: Viking, 13 E. 48th St., 1954. Pp. 62, \$2.50.*

These two books about horses for young children are very different in approach and yet will be extremely satisfying to young horse lovers.

In grandfather's day the world was full of horses, and though we don't see them as much today, they are being used in even more glamorous jobs than formerly. The delightful illustrations by Dahlov Ipcar really make *World Full of Horses*.

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the wonders of the brand new world around him. *Wonderful Things* is a distinctive book for younger children. *Ages: 4 to 8.*

A PICTURE HISTORY OF GREAT DISCOVERIES. By Clarke Hutton. Text by Mabel E. George. New York: Watts, 1955. Pp. 62, \$3.95. Good books on discovery and exploration make first-rate reading and are greatly needed as background material for American or world history courses. This simple, colorful presentation of the history of exploration is suitable for children eight years and up. However, the lack of an index and the high price of the book will limit its usefulness in school and public libraries. *Ages: 8 up.*

THE WHEEL ON THE SCHOOL. By Meindert De Jong. Illustrated by Maurice Sendak. New York: Harper, 49 E. 33rd St., 1955. Pp. 298. \$2.75. This is a delightful story of a Dutch fishing village and of the school children's attempt, aided by the schoolmaster, to attract storks to build their nests on their homes in the town of Shora. When the schoolmaster asked why the storks didn't come to Shora and the children at-

tempted to find the answer, it started a whole chain of events which culminated with the realization of their dream—storks on every roof in Shora. This is a warm-hearted, tender story of young people interested and enthusiastic about a cause. The relationship of the children to the older people in the story is delightful, and the picture of the schoolmaster is particularly favorable for those who are interested in education. *Ages: 9 to 14.*

THE WONDERS INSIDE YOU. Written and illustrated by Margaret Cosgrove. New York: Dodd, 432 4th Ave., 1955. Pp. 84. \$2.50. This first-rate presentation of anatomy and the functions of the human body is done in terms children eight years old and above can comprehend. The "living body is the most remarkable piece of machinery that exists. No man-made machine, no matter how wonderful, compares to it. But a body—your body—is more than a single machine; it is more, even, than several of them. It is a whole city of machines. . . ." By likening the body to a city with its complex system of police, sanitation, fire departments, trans-
(Continued on page 92)



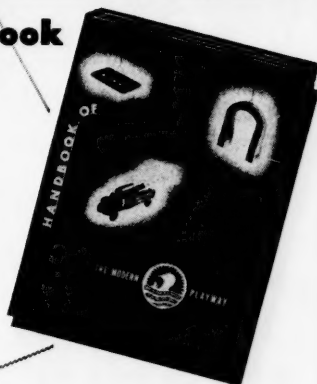
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Books for Children

(Continued from page 91)

portation, the author makes clear the various relationships between the different parts of the body. An excellent index and good pictures make this an extremely useful book. Ages: 8 to 14.

THE STORY OF MOSSES, FERNS AND MUSHROOMS. By Dorothy Sterling.

Photographs by Myron Ehrenberg. New York: Doubleday, 575 Madison Ave., 1955.

Pp. 159. \$2.75. Plants which have neither seeds nor flowers are classed as ferns and mushrooms. The haunting story of these organisms begins with a picture of the earth about two billion years ago when it was entirely water and rock and the first living things were forming.

The story, told with clarity and beauty, strikingly presents the endless variation of these common plants. The photographs of pioneering plants, moss spore cases, and fern fruit dots are among some of the most remarkable to be seen. The book unravels a part of natural science seldom told.

"If an engineer were to design a spore-distributing machine he could scarcely improve on the mushroom-umbrella." A "must" for all school and public library collections. Ages: 8 up. Reviewed by BARBARA BOWMAN.

HURRY, SKURRY & FLURRY. Written and illustrated by Mary and Conrad Buff. New York: Viking, 18 E. 48th St., 1954. Pp. 71.

\$2.75. The three squirrels Hurry, Skurry, and Flurry live a charmed first year of life in our native woods. Here is a realistic picture of the interdependence of our woods mammals upon each other. Their search for food, their encounters with danger, and their unique differences are beautifully presented, making the book an unusual introduction to nature lore.

The Buffs have again used the sepia sketches and rhythmic prose which they used so well in *Dash and Dart*, their earlier story of a deer family.

Little children will find the adventure very appealing and those just a bit older will be captivated by the actual natural science information which characterizes the story. Ages: 5 to 9. Reviewed by BARBARA BOWMAN.

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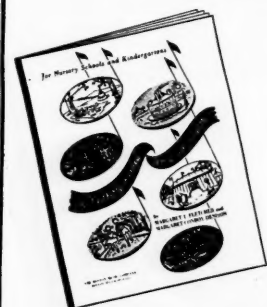
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Books for Adults . . .

Editors: LAURA ZIRBES
CECILE SWALES

ILLUSTRATED GAMES AND RHYTHMS FOR CHILDREN (Primary grades). By Frank H. Geri. New York: Prentice Hall, 70 5th Ave., 1955. Pp. 195. \$2.95. This readable book flows rhythmically from one activity to another. It is cleverly and uniquely illustrated and gives concise and clear resource information.

There is an intriguing approach through illustration in showing organization of classes, numbers of participants, and place of activity. The verbal description of the activity is short and meaningful.

The author emphasizes greater participation in group activity; less isolating of children from the group or of participation in two's or three's. It is not so specific that every teacher who reads it will be doing the activity the same way; it leaves a challenge for the creative and thoughtful teacher.

Consideration is given to these areas of physical education: fundamental rhythms,

animal rhythms, mechanical rhythms, dancing and singing games, tag games, special events and activities, circle games, goal games, and races and relay games.

This book would be an excellent resource for all elementary school teachers. It would serve as a source for stimulation as well as a guide to a more creative approach in physical education.—Reviewed by LUCY BURKETT, Shaker Heights High School, Cleveland.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN.

By D. Cyril Joynton. New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 15 E. 40th St., 1955. Pp. 215. \$4.75. The main part of the book is devoted to activities designed primarily to "train" or strengthen isolated muscle areas. These activities can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups of three or four. There are suggestions on how to use exercises, apparatus, small equipment, as well as methods for organizing classes for drill and practice situations.

In attempting to meet individual needs, is the author indicating a return to an individual gymnastics program? Working in smaller groups on individual or self-testing activities gives little opportunity to have a stimulating

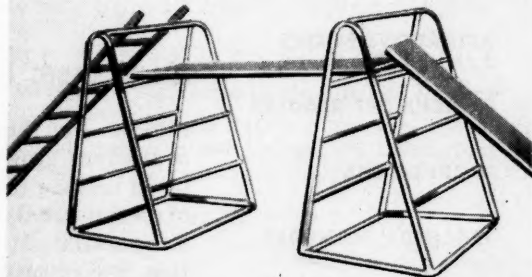
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thought-provoking situation. Self-testing activities have a place in an over-all physical education program, but they should by no means become the most important phase of a child's activity program. The development of neuromuscular skills and strengths is an important aspect of a child's total development in gaining security, but this alone is insufficient in assisting the child to his maximal development. Innumerable social, emotional, intellectual, as well as physical values could accrue from a program of physical education if it is primarily concerned with assisting children to become critical, curious, cooperative, creative, thinking individuals. The philosophy basic to such a program is incompatible with the philosophy underlying the program outlined in this book.—Reviewed by LUCY BURKETT.

FOUNDATIONS OF SCHOOL LEARNING.

By Harry Grove Wheat. New York: Knopf, 501 Madison Ave., 1955. Pp. 391. \$5.50.

... "all too many teachers and theorists are exerting their influence, no doubt with good intentions, to bring the learning of the school subjects into disrepute. Of such learning, they
(Continued on page 96)

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Books for Adults

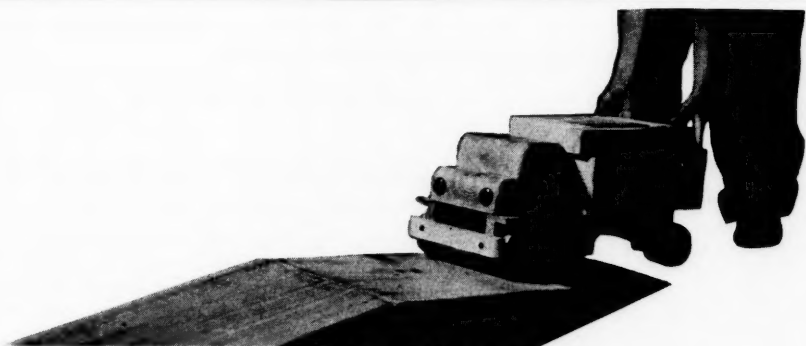
(Continued from page 95)

speak in derisive terms. It is ‘traditional,’ it is ‘disciplinary,’ it is ‘formal.’”

Dr. Wheat devotes the greater part of his carefully written text to prove these terms are not derisive but rather that they identify responsibilities which are unique to schools.

Teachers who have given unquestioning allegiance to pragmatic philosophy and organic psychology will not like much of what they read in this book. Teachers interested in reviewing the psychology and principles of education underlying conventional education procedures will find the book helpful although it is not easy or interesting reading.

The major purpose of the book seems to be a defense of carefully taught separate academic disciplines. The author's exposition and the personal experience of millions of parents attest to the value of this type of education program. Advocates of more integrated educational programs will be required, as they read this book, to ask themselves often, “are we doing a better job?”—Reviewed by HERBERT L. COON, *University School, Ohio State University, Columbus.*



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This annotated bibliography is one of the best of all lists to use for choosing books to recommend to young readers in whom it is hoped to develop human understanding and promote growth of social sensitivity.

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(Continued on page 98)

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Books for Adults

(Continued from page 97)

This choice reflects the successful experience in working with young people and their reading for which the compilers and the members of the staffs of the Cleveland school and public libraries are known. *Reviewed by* FRIEDA M. HELLER, librarian, University School, Ohio State University.

NATURE'S SECOND SUN. By Donald McLean. London: Wm. Heinemann Ltd., 99 Great Russell St., 1954. Pp. 130. This book is compiled of Leaves from a Teacher's Log. Mr. McLean has been for many years a headmaster of a school in Sydney, Australia. He tells us that while the names of the school and the people he is writing about are not authentic, the incidents are real, and deal with his own experiences with boys of unfortunate backgrounds.

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Editor, PATSY MONTAGUE

EDUCATING CHILDREN IN GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT. By Gertrude M. Lewis. *Bulletin 1954, No. 10. Washington 25, D. C.: Supt. of Documents, GPO, 1954. Pp. 99. 35¢.* "What should schools do for seventh and eighth grade children?" In answering this question, this careful study records practices considered good for children by parents, teachers, and administrators in 76 schools in 23 states. The characteristics and needs of children commonly found in grades seven and eight are discussed. Characteristics of desirable educational programs for pupils of this age are likewise presented.

The bulletin contains examples of what some schools within 54 cooperating systems are doing for pupils of this age, as well as examples of the ways in which these schools work with parents and the community. Excellent bibliography!—Reviewed by VESTER M. MULHOLLAND, *State Dept. of Public Instruction, Raleigh.*

OUR COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL.

(Revised). *Silver Spring Nursery School, Inc., Silver Spring, Md. 1954. Pp. 85. \$1.50.*

This is the story of a group of parents who cooperatively planned and provided a nursery school program in an educational system minus such a service. This revision of a useful bulletin sets forth the fundamentals for establishing a cooperative nursery school. Emphasis throughout is focused on the necessity for a professionally prepared staff, adequate equipment, proper housing, and high standards of instruction. Constructive warnings include the following: Informal play groups supervised by mothers and custodial day care of children do *not* constitute nursery schools.

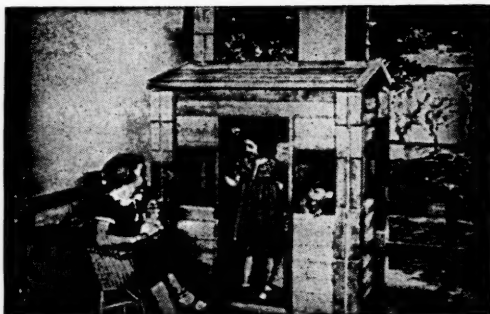
—P.M.

101 QUESTIONS ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION.

Chicago: National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 700 N. Rush St., 1954. Pp. 95. \$1. If you are looking for

ready answers to some of the important questions people are asking about public education, you should find this bulletin helpful. Here are 101 searching questions that delve into many phases of public education. Here are

(Continued on page 102)



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OCTOBER 1955

101

Bulletins and Pamphlets

(Continued from page 100)

101 clear-cut answers that depend solidly upon research. Here are 101 reliable references that help determine the answer to each question. Here is the kind of information that parents, teachers, and administrators need to have at their fingertips.—P.M.

FOLLOWING GRADUATES INTO TEACH-

ING. By Effie G. Bathurst and Jane Franseth. *Bulletin* 1954, No. 6, Washington, D. C.: Supt. of Documents, GPO, 1954. Pp. 45. 25¢. This bulletin is essentially a synthesis of follow-up services now provided by 181 publicly-supported colleges and universities. The colleges consider planned and coordinated services an integral part of the students total preparation for teaching. A thorough discussion of these services and their contribution to an effective teacher education program gives the publication distinct value to those who share the responsibility for preparing teachers.—Reviewed by NILE F. HUNT, coordinator of teacher education, North Carolina Dept. of Public Instruction, Raleigh.

COMICS, TV, RADIO, MOVIES—WHAT DO THEY OFFER CHILDREN?

By Josette Frank. *New York: Public Affairs Pamphlets*, 22 E. 38th St., 1955. Pp. 28. 25¢. This is a wise, common-sense approach to the increasingly important question: "What can parents, teachers, and the community do to provide a balance for today's children who face the combined impact of television, comics, and movies?"

The pamphlet contains suggestions for helping children to arrive at their own sound standards of selection. Constructive ideas are also presented for assisting pupils in budgeting their time wisely.—P.M.

A FATHER LOOKS AT PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

By Gladwin Hill. *Washington, D. C.: National School Public Relations Association*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C. 25¢. In a colorful and convincing manner, the author demolishes the idea "that progressive education neglects the three R's, that combined subjects are somehow subversive, that children are allowed to run amok." Coming from a father who is convinced that today's schools are good ones, the pamphlet is reassuring.—P.M.

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Over the Editor's Desk

Concepts Develop Through Experiences

Nelle Morris, of the University School, Ohio State University, Columbus, contributed this story:

One morning, Anne leading a new boy by the hand, joined the third-grade circle, "This is Walter. He came from Holland and he doesn't speak much English."

Sylvia: "And we do not speak much Dutch."

Teacher: "So it looks as if we might find it difficult to get acquainted. But perhaps Walter understands more English than he can speak."

Barbara: "May we introduce ourselves?" Each child in turn told his name.

T.: "What do we know about Holland?"

Donald: "It's lower than the sea."

John: "They build walls around it to keep out the sea."

Mary: "We sent money and clothes over there when they had a flood."

The teacher pulled down a map of the world. Several children commented: "That isn't the world." "It's not the whole world." "It ought to be. It says 'The World' right down here in the corner."

Keith: "Look, the Pacific Ocean's on the wrong side." (The map was hanging on a south wall.)

The teacher, sensing that the roundness of the globe and flatness of the map were causing confusion, placed a globe on the table below the map. She said, "You mean the map isn't like this globe?" The children nodded.

Sylvia: "I can prove whether it's the same."

T.: "All right, how will you do it?"

Sylvia: "Well, you see all those big pieces of land on the globe? I can see if they are all on the map."

John: "Those are continents."

The teacher wrote the word continent on the blackboard. Sylvia took a pointer and began with North America finding each continent on the globe and then pointing to the same on the map. She had not finished when she said, "Yes, I see they're all there."

Keith: "But I bet the Hawaiian Islands aren't."

T.: "Do you know the principal city of the Hawaiian Islands?"

Keith: "Honolulu."

The teacher handed him the pointer and after looking a little while he located the

Islands, saying, "Yes, I guess it's all there."

The teacher asked Walter if he could find Holland and show the route by which he came to the United States. Walter readily found Holland and traced the map to New York.

Realizing that the directions on the map were also causing confusion, the children were asked if they knew what direction the top of the map represented. After looking at the globe and the map they concluded it was north because the north pole was at the top of the globe.

Mark: "The Pacific Ocean's on the wrong side."

T.: "If you face north, do you know which hand is on the west side?" A number of children tried it and said, "The left hand." Their attention was then called to the Pacific Ocean at the left hand side of the map.

Kathleen: "But it's on both sides of the map."

T.: "Why do you think that is?"

Keith: "Oh, I see. If you could bend the map around like the globe, the two parts of the ocean would be together."

John: "But there's one continent we didn't find on the map."

T.: "What's that?"

John: "Antarctica."

T.: "Yes, it would be down here around the south pole, but this map is cut off flat. Are we all convinced this map represents the world?"

Next Month "Good Lines of Communication" is the theme of the November issue of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

Frances Hamilton has prepared an editorial on depth of communication. The need for the whole school personnel to think and act together is brought by Paul Misner. The place of parents in the program is shown from the successful experience of Frank Himmelmann. The needs for pre-service and inservice education to sharpen our communication skills is the idea presented by Robert Fox. Katherine D'Evelyn has written on some good techniques of conferencing.

Special features will include some research on children's free choice in reading; a story of a man who chose to teach first grade; and a report from another country.

News and reviews will contain news notes, reviews of books and magazine articles.

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